

employs Nikki Penny as Product Manager for the UK, and uses Elite Systems as a distribution agent. This contrasts with Loriciels expansion in the US market, where its products are handled via the existing American software house Broderbund (only seen on the C64 over here).

Naturally Loriciels' ambitious plans in the UK include the country's biggest selling games machine – the Spectrum. Jumping to the fore is a renamed French skiing game, Eddie Edwards: Super Ski, already released on various other machines. Other planned titles due next year include Space Racer, a sort of 'road blasting' game with a jet-bike instead of a car, and Turbo Cup which involves driving a Porsche at high speeds. Loriciels are planning to self the latter in a package containing a model Porsche, but certain high street chain stores object to the extra trouble involved – so it's doubtful whether this will now happen (pity, t've always wanted a Porsche – Ed).

#### TITUS

nd

The original French software company started as a development house writing for other French publishers until 1987, when they developed their own product – the very playable racing game *Crazy Cars* (65%, Issue 52).

However, this was not released in the UK until Titus (UK) was set up and launched in December 1987 by the British company Entertainment International. Crazy Cars was first released here on the Amiga, Atari ST, with 8-bit versions following three months later. This is because all Titus products are developed on the 16-bit machines, but with the 8-bits in mind. Due to the Amstrad's considerable market strength in France, the French company employ a team of specialist Z80 programmers, ensuring that both Amstrad and Spectrum versions are well implemented

Titus have recently had considerable success on the 16-bit machines with yet another driving game. Fire And Forget

involves blasting down roads in some of the world's troublespots, battling with enemy tanks and helicopters, while collecting fuel pods. This action-packed game is currently being converted to the Spectrum, and from the screen pics we've seen, it looks very promising.

Titus also have two new Spectrum releases lined up for the new year. First is Galactic Conqueror, a space 3-D shoot-'em-up, containing over 400 planets on which to do battle. It is promised to contain plenty of strategy, as well as fast arcade action and is due for a January release.

Also due for a New Year release is the sequel to *Crazy Cars*, ingeniously entitled *Crazy Cars II*. Many extra features are promised, including police cars which chase you if you break the speed limit! (I don't like the sound of this – Ed.)

Titus are obviously revving up their engines for a bright future.



#### SPANISH AFFAIR

Spain is the second-largest Spectrum-owning country in the world (after the UK), but only two of its software companies have broken into the UK market, and both through deals with British software houses.

#### DINAMIC

Spain's leading software house was formally founded under the name Microdigital Soft, back in 1986, but the founders of the company had already been publishing games under the Dinamic name over a year earlier. Two of these early games, the boxing game *Rocco* (70%, Issue 19) and the arcade adventure *Profanation* (78%, Issue 19), were licensed in the UK by Gremlin Graphics.

But it was in 1986 that Dinamic had one of its greatest successes in Britain with West Bank (84%, Issue 25), again licensed by Gremlin. The action takes place in a Wild West bank, where you try to prevent a variety of baddles from robbing the bank. Other releases that year included two Code Masters games. Phantomas and Vampire as well as Camelot Warriors (licensed by the now-defunct Ariolasoff).

controls all the areas between production and retail.

Naturally, now the contract with Ocean expired, Dinamic are launching a direct assault on the UK Market. They have recently signed a deal with Electronic Arts who will be distributing their products throughout Europe (excluding Italy, Portugal and of course, Spain). The first game released under the new deal was Game Over II, which received a respectable 60% in last issue.

Early next year should see the release of the sequel to Army Moves. The action in Navy Moves will take place on the sea and will involve sailing across the horizontally-scrolling screen, fighting against enemy boats. Then it's time to don your wetsuit and dive into the deep blue ocean, equipped with a harpoon to fight off dangerous sea creatures such as octopuses and



1987 saw further UK success, this time through Ocean/Imagine with titles such as Army Moves (54%, Issue 41), Game Over (55%, Issue 44), and Freddy Hardest (87%, Issue 47). Then came Dinamic's most successful Spanish-selling game to date (although not really a best-seller over here), Basket Master (73%, Issue 51) – selling over 90000 units in Spain, making it Spain's highest selling computer game EVER!

In three successful years the company has expanded into a group of enterprises covering marketing, publicity, distribution and publishing. This group of related enterprises gives Dinamic an advantage over its competitors, as the Microdigital Soft group sharp-toothed sharks.

Two further releases are already planned for 1989: Aspar GP Master and After The War. 'What does Aspar mean?', you ask. Well apart from meaning 'slipper' in Catalan (PUKE – Phil's Useless Knowledge Encyclopaedia) it is the name of Spain's most famous (never heard of him) motorcycle champion on whose racing exploits the game is based. Not surprisingly the game may be renamed for its release in the UK. After The War promises to be a novel beat-'em-up, including both armed (with machine gunst) and unarmed combat.

Dinamic hopes to have a truly dynamic future in the European software market.





#### TOPOSOFT

Toposoft have recently had success with Mad Mix Game (which earned an impressive 85%, last issue). This Pac-Man-style game features twelve levels of crazy action, including oodles of whacky features – the Spectrum version was written by Raffaele Gomez.

However not many people realise that the Spanish programming house had earlier success in Britain with other Spectrum games, through various British software houses. The most notable of these early titles was *Survivor* (70%, Issue 44), released again by US Gold. This arcade adventure featured a massive spaceship play area with some very colourful graphics.

Although Toposoft don't have the financial 'muscle' of their compatriots



Dinamic, they too are aiming to continue their success in the UK.

#### THE GERMAN SISTERS

Despite the popularity of home computers in Germany and plenty of specialist magazines such as *Happy Computer*, German-produced software is still fairly thin on the ground compared to France and Spain. But two programming houses have managed to sell their products over the English Channel, via major UK software houses.

#### RAINBOW ARTS

Rainbow Arts is one of a group of labels marketed by German trade agency, Softgold. Rainbow Arts' software is being distributed in the UK by US Gold.

Unfortunately their first intended release in the UK, The Great Giana Sisters (92%, Issue 55) will never be released due to the hassling from Nintendo, who reckoned it looked too much like Super Mario Brothers (fair enough, it looks a bit like it ... well, if they'd produced a decent SMB in the first place it wouldn't have been needed, would it?). But even worse luck was to follow, Rainbow Arts' next scheduled release Katakis, was also withdrawn, this time due to the threat of legal action from Mediagenic (owners of Electric Dreams), who weren't pleased at the game's resemblance to R-Type (CRASH Smashed in this issue). And it looks like the planned The Great Giana Sisters II - Arthur And Martha In Future World will also never



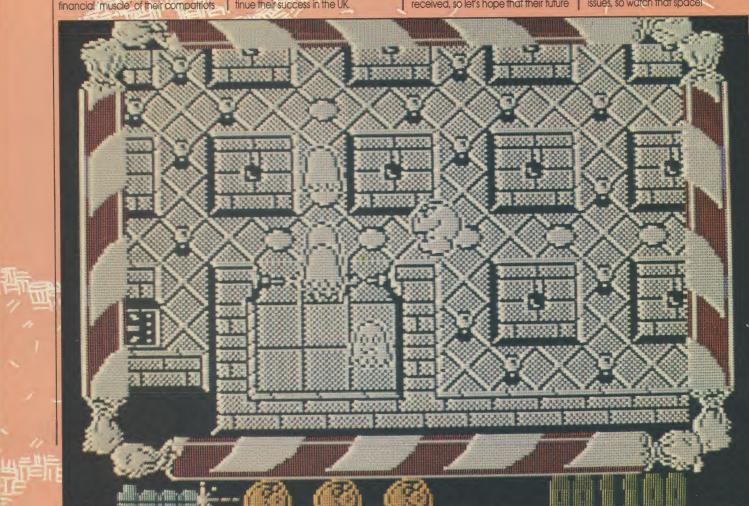
see the light of day. What an unlucky bunch of chaps, you may think.

But never mind, Rainbow Arts still have some more goodles planned (provided no other company objects) with the strange cave game, Realm Of Trolls (probably not to be seen on the Spectrum, though) and the even more ominous-sounding Mutant Hell. Rainbow Arts always guarantee addictive, playable and original games.

#### MAGIC BYTES

The other German software house which has broken into the UK market is Magic Bytes, who recently released – via Gremlin Graphics – *Pink Panther* across all the major formats. Unfortunately the game was not well-received, so let's hope that their future

releases, including another cartoon licence, *Tom And Jerry*, are a mite better. Also due for release in 1989 are *Night Dawn* and *USS John Young*. More details about these and other Magic Bytes releases will be appearing in the Previews section within the next few issues, so watch that space!



FIRST
THERE WAS

STAR
WARS

THEN



NOW DOMARK BRINGS YOU....

# RETUR

### The third fabulous game of the Star Wars trilogy!

A stunning direct conversion of the coin-op which follows the thrilling action of the movie.

Three great levels of gameplay. . .

In the first level you are Princess Leia on her Speederbiker rushing through the forest of Endor.

Level Two sees you controlling Chewbacca's Scout Walker.

On level Three you are Chewbacca and Lando flying the Millennium Falcon.

Fight off T.I.E. Fighters, survive the lethal tube,

blast the reactor and turnaround from

the exploding Death Star.





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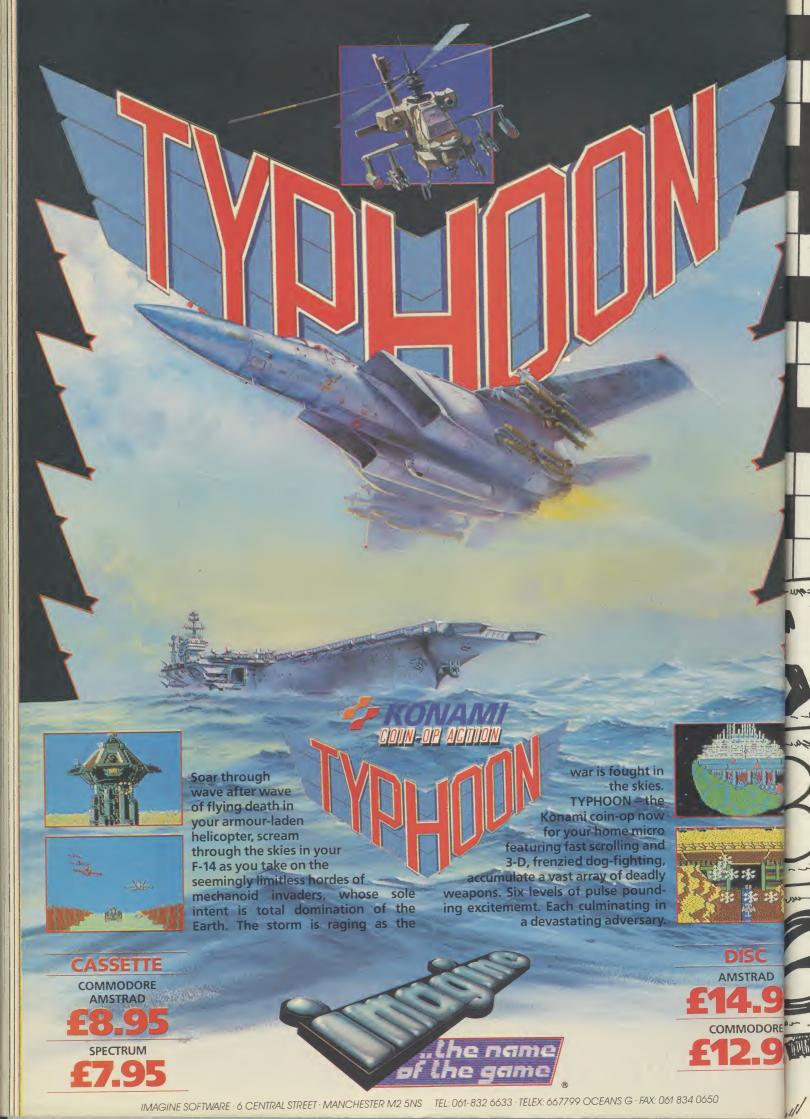
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Commodore	•	£9.95	£12.95
Amstrad		£9.95	£14.95
Amiga 💉 🗀			£19.95
Atari ST			£19.95

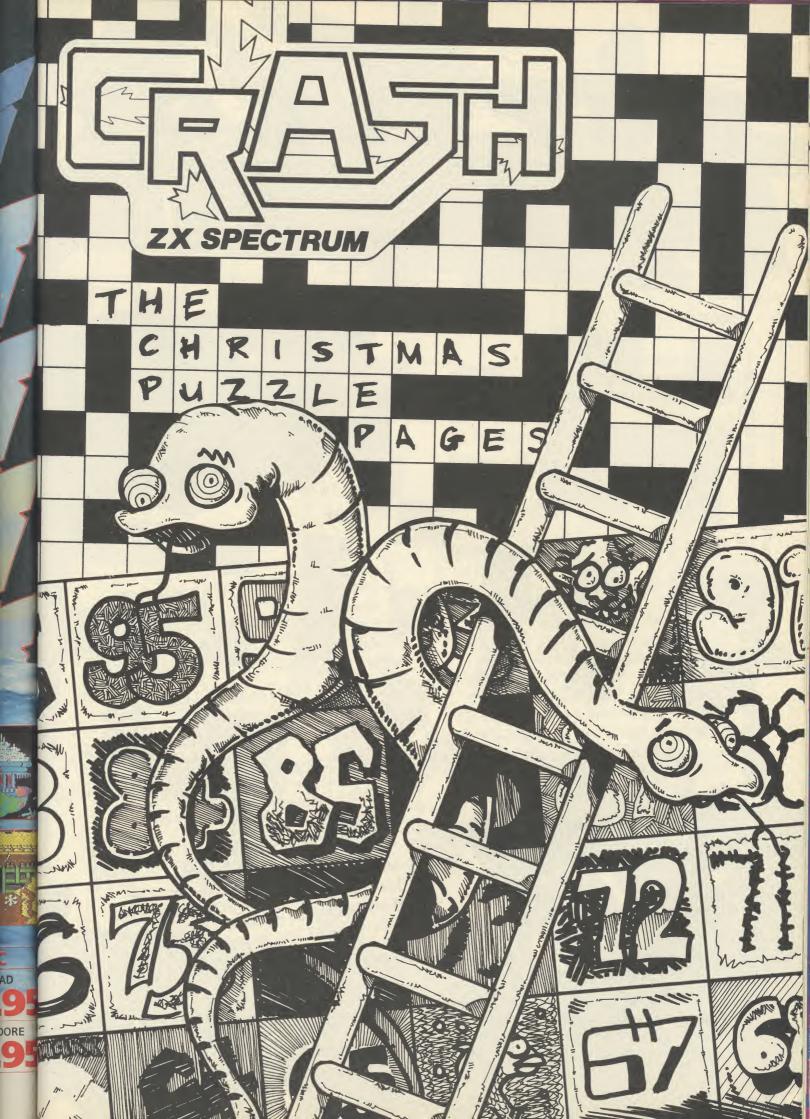
Programmed by

CONSULT COMPUTER SYSTEM

May the Force be with you

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So what's CRASH the computer entertainment magazine doing with a load of puzzles in it, you may be asking yourself? Well, don't know, actually. Seemed like a good idea at the time . . .

Lonely winter nights? Not any more!

Within the following pages are a large cross-section of all that's wise and wonderful in the world of puzzles. From crazy Christmas crosswords to whacky winter wordsearches; from The CRASH Towers board game to Santa's spiral – they're all here. There's no prizes (except for The Muncher competition), so just sit back with the well-warmed quill and enjoy yourself. Answers will be printed in

#### **ACROSS**

- 1 Does is rule the pop world? (6)
- 5 There way out sound is needed for mixing. (6)
- 8 What all Stock/Aitken/Waterman tracks sound.
- 9 What all slick shirts should be made of. (4)
- 10 A very long and placid ditty. (4)
- 11 The appetizer.
- (5)
- 14 Lie back! (7)
- 17 Biologically green. (7)
- 19 Nick's favourite tracks are usually one of these. (3)
- 20 He's not square! (5)
- 21 Nick sets a new one every day! (5)
- 22 Hit your balls from here. (3)
- 23 Shopping mall singer. (7)
- 25 Old-fashioned disco light? (7)
- 29 What the Ed's car is top of (the heap Nick). (5)
- 30 Lazy Monty Python star. (4)
- 32 Nick cools down with a few of these. (4)
- 34 A computer that grows on a tree. (5)
- **35** Shaking your love with a gorilla (of sorts). (6)
- 36 What every disco needs. (6)



- 1 French impression. (6)
- 2 Dropping a penny to take a tablet. (3) 3 Sheena's a modern girl. (6)
- 4 Mine's a cheese and banana! (5)
- 5 Put your heads to the metal instead (!?!). (6) 6 Mark Caswell dropped his to become OTS writer. (3)
- 7 Now that's what I call smart! (6)
- 12 Now that's what I call Phil! (7)
- 13 The time it took to compile these puzzle pages.
- 15 Samara still uses this ink. (5)
- 16 The worst sort of cola can. (5)
- 17 Watch your step Eric, your daze are numbered! (5)
- 18 When contributors' work is late. (5)
- 23 Crucial Challenge apparatus. (6)
- 24 Showing the old flat-capped wisdom. (6)
- 26 Let's hope Nick passes his next one. (1,5) 27 What Nick's disco equipment makes lots of. (6)
- 28 Cam ---- every twig he sees. (5)
- 31 The winning shot in Match Point.
- 33 All smokers have --- (3)

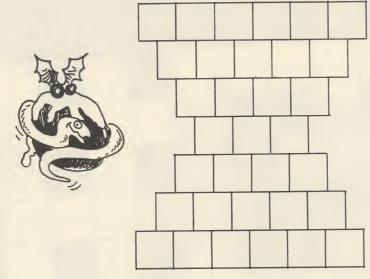




# DROP'EM (AND THEN PICK THEM UP AGAIN)!

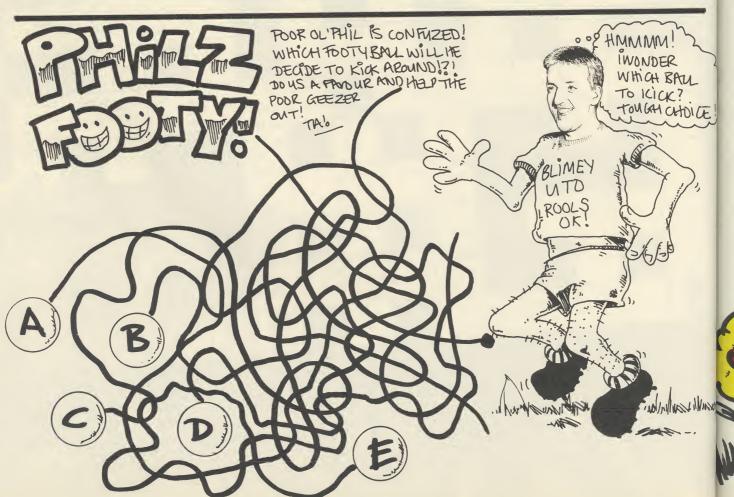
#### STUCK IN THE MUD?

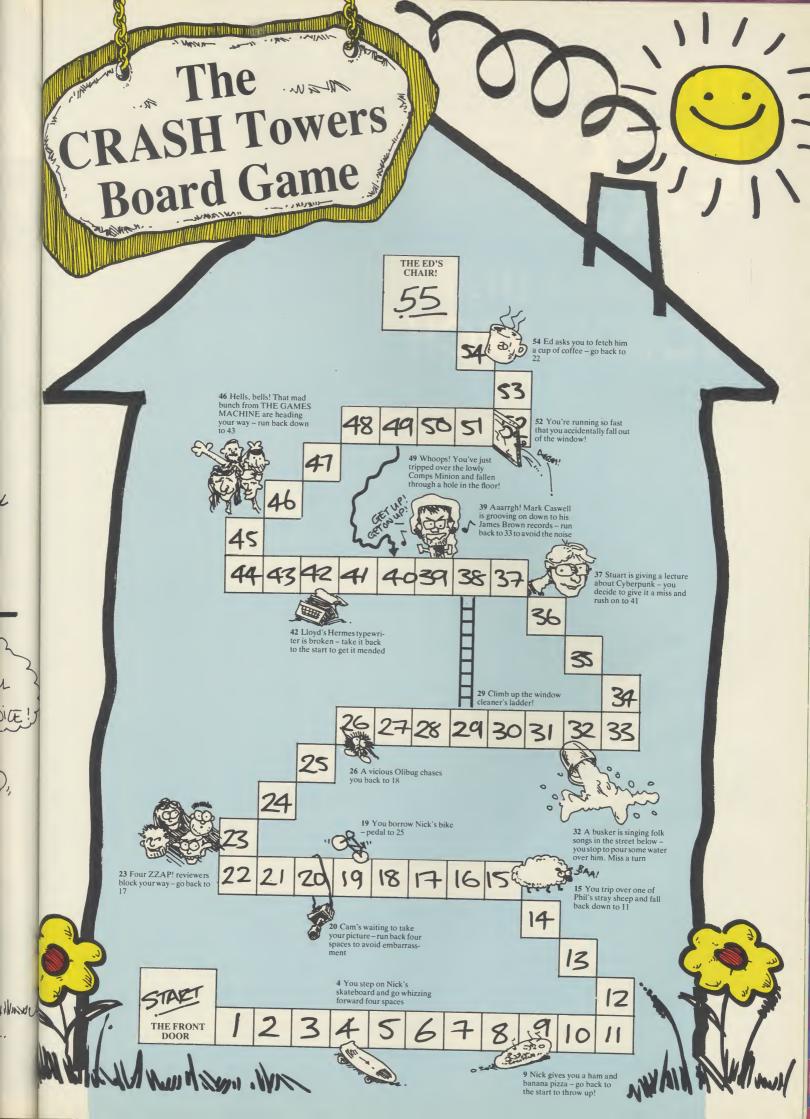
This one's dead simple. lust find the answer to the first question, put it in the top row of boxes. Now, if you take one letter away from it, you'll get the answer to the second question . . . and so on till you get to middle, when the reverse happens. Just add a letter to get the correct answer. Simple!





- Like a bear (not necessarily with a sore head).
- Hold on to them, you might fall off! What the Editor likes his staff to call him . . .
- . . . And what he expresses when we don't!
- What Phil likes with a vindaloo.
- It's a PBM game!
- Down with imperialism!







### PICTORIAL PONDERING THROUGH THOSE COLD CHRISTMAS NIGHTS



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## WHAT ARE THEY LIKE?

JUST FILL IN THE GRAPH WITH THE ATTRIBUTES OF EACH PERSON. WE'VE DONE ONE FOR YOU (Colin is 12 years old, but what does he like?).

#### **CLUES**

- 1 Colin is only 12-years-old and loves strategy games.
- 2 Neither Adam or the edlest owsn an Atari ST computer.
- 3 David likes either sports simulations

or shoot-'em-ups, and is younger than the 15-year-old Amstrad owner, who is not an adventure fan.

4 Liz the C64 owner is older than the owner of the Spectrum.

- The Amiga owner likes arcade adventures.
- 6 Brenda doesn't own an Amstrad and is not 13.

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Do ' was feat sto the Chu of C this we diff 56, Gra not and mon stol scie N pee a ra hun mar gen R com thou a la fron ther alth mor he a CRA reac scal to m Il beca the: the mon Che - luc tood year Sc more can stud page and pref or ar

7 The 14-year-old is the shoot-'em-up fan.

Confused? Well don't blame us – Nick Roberts is the one to blame for this one.

	COMPUTER				AGE					FAVE GAME					
	SPECTRUM	COMMODORE 64	AMSTRAD	ATARI	AMIGA	12	13	14	15	16	ARCADE ADVENTURE	ADVENTURE	SHOOT-'EM-UP	SPORTS SIMULATION	STRATEGY
ADAM															
BRENDA															
COLIN						<b>/</b>	×	×	X	X					
DAVID															
LIZ															
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# 10 HUNGRY CRASH READERS STANDING ON THE WALL

ALONG COMES A GREMLIN TO GIVE 365 PACKETS OF CHEWITS

TO THEM ALL (not very plausible – Ed)

#### THE MUNCHER

Do you remember the advert that was shown on TV a few years ago, featuring a large monster who stomped on various cities around the world before some guy, called Chuck, stopped him with a packet of Chewits? Probably not. What's this to do with the new (well, in fact we reviewed the game under a different title - T-Wrecks - in Issue 56, 80%. Confused?) Gremlin Graphics game The Muncher? Well not a lot, except that it stars a large, and very annoyed Japanese monster whose eggs have been stolen by a bunch of meddling scientists.

Naturally she's more than a bit peeved and decides to go on a bit of a rampage, teaching those horrible humans a thing or two about mangling, maiming, and being generally offensive.

Rather than phone up about the competition details, Gremlin thought it would be clever to send a large, and very green, refugee from a Japanese B movie to deliver them in person – show-offs. But although he's well-trained, the old monstrous instincts took over and he accidently, hmmm, sat on the CRASH offices. The slip of paper reached me after a large green scaley arm poked through the door to my cupboard ruins.

I hope you've a sweet tooth, because Gremlin have arranged for the first ten names — picked out of the building by the jolly green monster — to win 365 packets of Chewits (a year's supply they said — lucky 1989's not a leap year). You too could be a hero like Chuck (for a year, at least).

So what do you have to do to win more packets of sweets than you can shake a monster's tail at? First, study the simple puzzle on this page, work out the correct route, and send in your answer – preferably not by monster, dragon or any other large reptile – to the



"HOLD MATT!

# THE MAMMC

#### **ACROSS**

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1 Are these two prehistoric characters bearing the brunt of soreness? (6,6)

4 First name of character who starred in the game with built-in primary imbalance (5)

6 This software house could become habit forming (9)

8 See 22 across

14 Amstrad's boss is such a sweet man (5)

15 Work your way up to this exalted rank with Firebird's trading game (5)

16 Deadly rival of the Grand Master of Termight (17)

19 and 10 down Mastertronic's fairground shooting game (5,5)

20 Did this assignment go by the geographical text book (5)

21 Name of Softek's caveman who enjoys stealing dinosaur eggs (3)

22 and 8 across Darth Vader's revenge (3,6,7,4)

23 Comic created by Don Lawrence, the 'father' of Dan Dare (5)

25 You would have to be a Berk to go down there (8)

26 May the force be with you (4,4)

28 Do you have the Incentive to made a squashing sound (5)

29 See 32 across

30 Is this man still the copyright of Mel Croucher? (2)

32 and 29 across Name of character in the Delta 4 spoof ---- -- Sherlock (5,2)

33 Alice went to his tea party (9)

35 Gremlin used mirrors and a laser to good effect (9)

0

38 and 99 down And on the 8th day this game was Quilled and appeared in Issue 22 (5,5)

40 This software company will leave you all at

41 Timothy Gloss says that you need one to see the light (5)

42 This CCS game was no market garden (6)

43 See 96 across

44 This software house does not allow riff-raff on its premises (5)

45 Was David Todd really so tiny (6)

46 They call him the wanderer (5)

48 Watchword of the alien resistance group opposed to the Termight Empire and its tyrannical overlords, The Terminators (5)

**49** Chuckie laid one (3)

51 See 68 down

53 The eight-sided figure has lost all of its energy (5)

55 Title given to Mega City cops – Joe Dredd is one (5)

56 Do they motivate the software industry? (9)

It unlocks the fourth dimension (3,2,4)

60 Fido has been invested with super powers (5,4)

61 Tram exit for Argus Press (4,4)

63 Short Australian animal scores a double century - what a fighter (5)

64 Silversoft's systematic killer (12)

65 Re-useable spacecraft (5,7)

'E kips the other way round for Firebird (5)

67 Former American goes north to see Pete Cooke (5)

69 Red indian hitches a lift in a helicopter (8)

70 Indiana Jones is one (8)

72 Dare you pirate this Firebird game? (5)

75 In space no-one can hear you play computer games (5)

76 Doesn't Rainbird's stellar craft have engines (10)

77 It's a good thing that the Queen doesn't live here (6)

79 Did Binary Design call in Rentokill on this game (8)

82 Have CAT will travel (7)

83 Painting reverses in the morning, making a computer-aided board game (5)

86 Bulldog involve themselves in a family quarrel (4)

87 District Attorney says thank you for information (4)

88 Newton used one to create the first spectrum (5)

89 Greek lucky number (5,5)

91 What's this, a Dragon game on the Spectrum

93 and 95 down You have to be fast on the draw with this Mastertronic game (5,4)

96 and 43 across Star of Ocean's p-p-pick up a Penguin game (6,5) 97 See 97 down

98 Card game made famous by Sam Fox (5)

100 In short, engineer Edward (10,3)

103 If you want a Positive Image, look out for this dwelling (11)

106 See 57 down

107 Mr Big is in for a rough time (8)

108 Don't mess with this software company, you may find yourself flat on your back (7)

109 Don't drink that, it's illegal (11)

#### DOWN

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1 They should have called in Bombjack to deal with this one (9)

2 Rescue attempt by CRL way back in Issue 3

3 Mr Lee's first name (5)

5 Does Ripley dream of electric androids (6)

7 Everyone's favourite computer magazine (5)

8 Some lucky person may have shouted this word when they had solved the clues in this search for the pieces of a Temporal Talisman (6)

9 Was this racing game a Thorn in Graham Wisdom's side (4,5)

10 See 19 across

11 See 28 down

12 A blocky puzzle game that is unlikely to become a CULT hit (6)

13 Another name for the fiery Phoenix (8)

17 Code Masters excel at this type of game (9) 18 Activision's pillage of a natural waterway

24 Japanese contestants on the pain threshold

25 Did Microsphere consult Casey Jones when programming this game (5,4)

27 Steve Crow's stellar tremble (9)

28 and 11 down David Perry gets involved with some heavy metal (9,5)

31 Arnold Schwarzenegger's long haired alter-

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33 Magic Knight woz 'ere (12)

34 Pete Cooke is on taut ice (3,4)

Lee Majors took a tumble in this one (4,3)

This GI likes CHIPS (5,7)

Did Ace carry out the provisions of a will? (7)

47 Did this Bulldog game blow itself up for nothing? (9)

48 Did Halley play this? (5,4)

50 Power failure, look for one of these little fellows (7

52 CRL's rejected person (7)

54 Rally driver has a bad dream (9)

55 Used to control an aircraft - as well as a computer game (9)

57 and 106 across Redshift travelled to the White Mountains in search of these three legged

monsters (3,7) 59 Luke Skywalker cut a few of these as he battled with the Empire's fighters (3)

60 Cosmic Caledonian crone (9)

62 The Ultimate way to estrange someone (6)

**68 and 51 across** The eyes have it for this mutant bounty hunter (9,3) 69 Imagine coming down to earth on a famous bobsleigh run (5,6)

71 Activision's monster game will certainly bring the house down (7) 72 Ohno, not another pirated Firebird game (9) 73 These red and blue monsters battle it out on a distant planet (5)

74 An unlikely hero, this bird even smokes cigars (6,3,4)

77 The flaming bird is spelled wrongly - what a Megadodo (7)

78 Firebird twist Lucy into 3-D (4)

80 This guy found himself to be the target for some nasty villains (4)

81 Famous film character created by Edgar Rice Burroughs (6)

84 Shopping has never been such fun (4,2,5)

Activision had a great short run with this (11)

90 Samara's type of game (9)

92 Male sheep (3)

94 Set the stakes on a poker game (4)

95 See 93 across

97 and 97 across Gargoyle's journey to the stars

**99** Don't push him (5)

100 See 38 across

101 Bug Byte's scene of conflict (5)

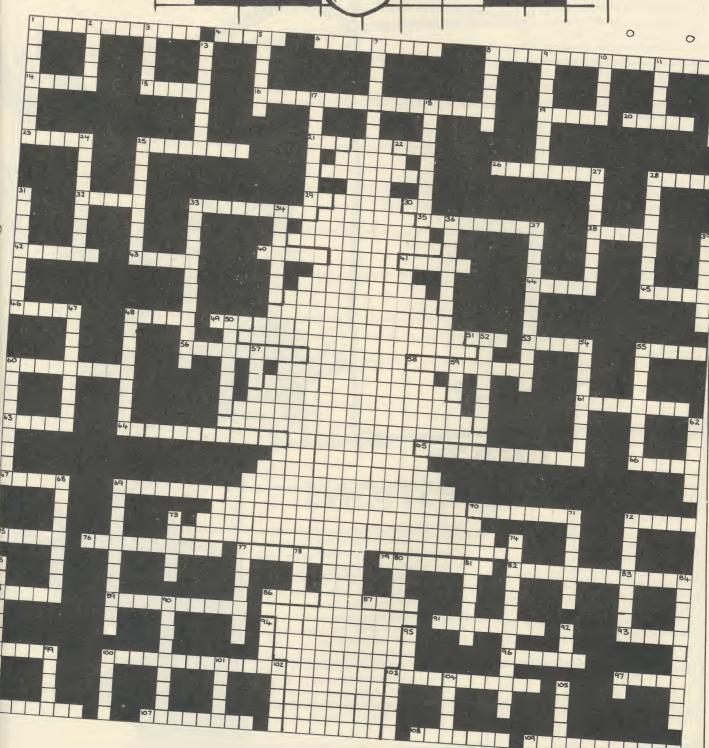
102 On the day it is 50 interfaces (5)

103 Was this Break-Out variant really barmy

104 Frodo, along with many others tried to become Lord of the ---- (5)

105 US Gold's sword-wielding caped crusader

# CHRISTMAS



#### CLUES An Archimedes quote on the Spectrum! (6) Pete Cooke's follow-up to Tau Ceti. (7) 3 This famous bear made a fishy appearance on the Spectrum. (4)4 A 'reincarnated' software label. (7) An upper-class group of programmers? (5) An excellent pre-Cybernoid from Raffaele Cecco. (6) Hewson's 'rotating tower' game. (7) An early Defender-type game from Softek. (9) 9 The bad ones were red and the goodies were blue. (5) 10 David Jones's second Magic Knight game. (10) 11 The first Freescape game. (7) 12 Lothlorien's soldiers didn't have square bonces! (10) 13 Quicksilva's dog was radioactive. (9) 14 US Gold's futuristic Namco conversion has recently been re-released at a budget price. (10) 15 Realtime's second release. (10) 16 Activision's motorbike racer. (6) 17 Is the wolf having his appendix removed? (9) 18 Was Ocean's rally a bad dream? (9) 19 Level 9's green isle. (7) 20 Did Barnes Wallace design this game? (10) 21 The Chicago Bears took on the New England Patriots in this sports simulation. (9) 22 What Eric Bean's gnomes were. (4) 23 Was this lucky for Games Workshop? (8) 24 This famous French general was at war with CCS. (8) 25 CRL's strange hamster. (5) 26 Could Imagine turn lead into gold. (9) 27 Dave Marshall's classic helicopter simulation. (8) 28 Micromania's jumping kangaroo was out of this world! (6) 29 Nick's favourite Raf Cecco game. (9) 30 The sequel to The Legend Of Avalon. (10) 31 Elite's classic Capcom shoot-'em-up conversion. (8) 32 Lissa's co-star in Firebird's budget game. (4) 33 What the 'I' stands for in IK+. (13) 34 An art utility from Creative Sparks. (8) 35 Elite's recent 'roadblasting' game. (10) 36 The 'mad monk' appeared on the Firebird label. (8) 37 When did Ocean's story end? (5) 38 Steve Turner's hack and slay game rhymes with an all-girl pop group! (8) CRAZY CRASH QUESTIC 1 If Nick can eat a 6" (diameter) pizza in 20 secleft. If he scores a goal, he will automatically score onds, how long should he take to him eat a 9" another in twice the time he took to score the one (of the same thickness)? previous one. How quickly must be score the first 2 If it takes two CRASH reviewers two hours to goal to ensure that Leicester win the match? review two games, how long does it take three Richard 'Promotions' Eddy spends at least ZZAP! reviewers to review one game? eight hours a day on the phone - how large is 3 Why did Dominic Handy put Persil on his Newsfield's bill from British Telecom? 8 If Lloyd Mangram types two words a minute 4 If Stuart utters the word 'Cyberpunk' ten on his Hermes typewriter, approximately how times every minute, how many times does he say long does it take him to type out his Forum? it in one whole day? 9 If Nick's stomach can hold 10 litres of liquid 5 Mark thinks James Brown is so groovy, but plus 20kg of food, how much heavier is he after how many grooves does one of his records conconsuming a full load of pizzas and Cherry Coke? tain? 10 Is the number 42, a) the meaning of life; b) 6 6 Phil is playing football for Leicester City (wishmultiplied by 7;c) the number of pizzas Nick eats ful thinking) and has just come on as a substitute, each day or d) all three? but his side are losing 5-0 with only 21 minutes 138 CRASH Christmas Special 1988

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		1				30								29	
							38				37				



- 1 Mark Caswell's first artistic nickname (8).
- 2 US Gold's ultimate mission (4); a *Break-Out* game to drive you barmy (5).
- 3 The interface to have with a microdrive (3); what Hercules turned the minotaur in to (4).
- 4 What to say to the Prime Minister (3); you do this a lot in driving games (4).
- 5 A sort of sceptre, star and empire (4); the colour of Imagine's beret (5).
- 6 Super brothers (5); throw a computer (4).
- 7 A type of wolf or defence (3); what ZZAP!

- reviewers do when they lose the challenge (again!) (4).
- 8 Contemporary software generation (3); Giana's changes style (4).
- 9 What some adventures don't have (8).
- 10 Don't push Ocean (5); it came from the gods (4).
- 11 An edible computer (5); the best sort of score to get (4).
- 12 A crazy title for a software house (3); Samara insists on calling hers a quill (3).

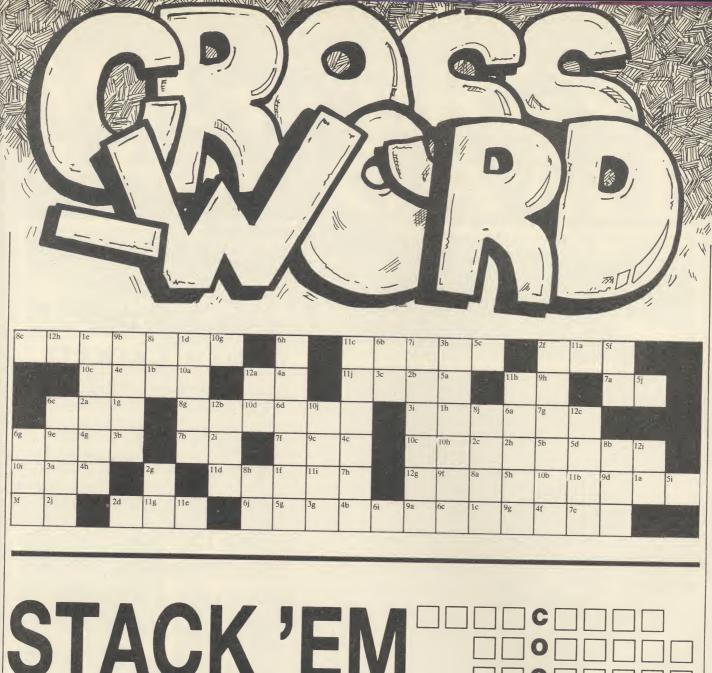


#### HELP!

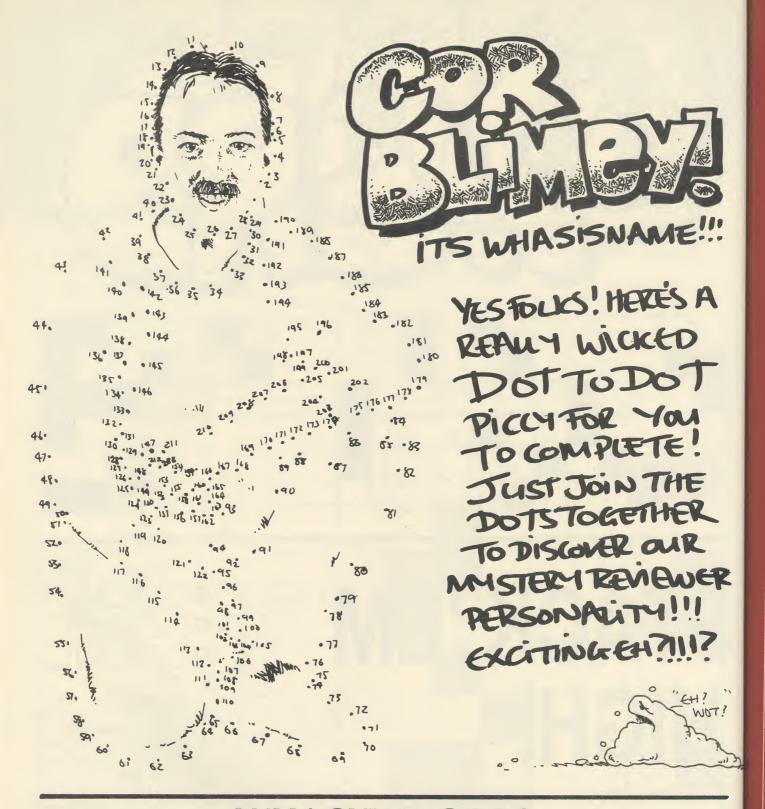
Right, then. Compared to most of the crazy puzzles that we've thought up, this one's dead easy. Just look at the clues, write the answers in the gaps in the answer square (a mysterious character should appear down the left-hand side!). Now transfer the letters to the corresponding coordinated squares in the horizontal diagram, to spell out yet more words. See, told you it was easy!

Who thinks up these puzzles anyway?

	a	b	C	d	е	f	g	h	i	J
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STACK'E	M
HIGH!	
<ol> <li>Uncle Toms' company. Now part of Prism Leisure</li> <li>Uncle Mel</li> <li>Dave put Daley on the Spectrum!</li> <li>Adrian or Monty?</li> <li>Mr Week's first game</li> <li>Former Liverpool software house fell into the ocean</li> <li>In long, Japan Capsule Computers</li> <li>Elite's old Wilf</li> </ol>	K
<ul> <li>9 Lion-O and friends</li> <li>10 Owners of Melbourne House and distributors of the Sega console</li> <li>11 David created <i>Starion</i></li> <li>12 The man beyond the land of Midnight</li> <li>13 Gremlin donated the profits of this adventure to Soft-Aid</li> <li>14 Their first Spectrum game was 3-D Tank Duel</li> <li>15 Fantasy's castle</li> </ul>	



### WHACKY WORDS

Spot and correct the 20 deliberate mistakes (underneath)

LLOYD MANGRAM was using his Hermes typewriter when all of a sodden, it ceased up. 'Oh no,' mattered an annoyed Lloyd, 'and I've got no oil.' Just then, Nick Roberts rowed into the office on his bike, knocking a vase of flours onto the floor. 'Whoops,' uttered the embellished Nick, his facia as red as a beetle. Just then, in worked Phil King, wearing his grin trousers.

'Well, what a moss!' he laughed. 'Has anyone got any oil?' axed the frus-

trated Lloyd, his paper bog getting socked from his sweat. Well, you've nether seen anything like it; Nick produced a battle of vegetable oil, but it slept out of his hands and spelt all over the floor. This was too much for Lloyd and he elapsed onto the ancient typewriter. He immediately got up, realising that his Hermes had started working again – he was on cloud eight!

# MASTERING



### beginner's guide to fantasy roleplaying

The imminent arrival of the official Dungeons And Dragons licence Heroes Of The Lance (from SSI/US Gold) perfectly illustrates the heavy interest of the software houses in Fantasy Roleplaying. GRAHAM CAL-LUM explains what FRP is, how it originated and why computer games so often fail to capture its incredible depth.



he computer games been flooded by vast number of games that have FRP stamped all ple you have The Bard's Tale trilogy, the Ultima series, Lancelot, Dun-geon Master and even Wizard Warz! All of these products claim them in the hands of a true fantasy roleplayer he – or she – would tell you in no uncertain terms that you've been duped. Why? Well, FRP is all about freedom of choice and no matter how well programmed a product is, you'll never get that in a computer game

In fact the whole FRP hobby started over the question of freedom. Over ten years ago, a man called E Gary Gygax became fed up with the limitations that wargame rules imposed on him. He wanted his army to act as individuals, not units, so he drafted up his own rules system. After a series of revisions, he came up with a set of rules called Dungeons And Dragons or D&D as it is fondly known. D&D was marketed by TSR, a large American games company, and the game's since sold in its millions all over this was that players could 'roleplay' the part of a character they created

Character creation consists of rolling a six-sided dice several

character's capable of. You then select one of the four character classes available – Fighter Cleric, Magic-user or Thief - as ranges from Human to Dwarf. a Gamesmaster, or GM as they are more commonly known.

The GM then sits down and creates the world that the players' characters will inhabit. He/she has to know the rules backwards and be responsible for the running of the game. During the play the GM is a god-like creature, knowing all, but revealing only small titbits of information to the players - making it difficult for them to piece together a complete picture of their predic ment. Furthermore the GM has to be quick-witted, making instant decisions and playing the part of everybody the players Desdemona the despicable dragon. They are also responsible for issuing Experience Points The players obtain these points by defeating monsters in combat, achieving a set objective, or simply by playing their character's character in the correct manner. Once a sufficient amount of EPs are obtained, a player is allowed to train up their character to another rank, meaning that they can enhance their natural abilities and live longer. For example, a Magic User who has gone up a rank can cast more powerful spells and take more wounds from any blows laid upon

him by opponents. A typical adventure might commence by the GM explaining

that the characters would be hav ing a few swift ales in the local denly the doors open and in walks a beautiful woman, wrapped in a long blue cloak, flanked by two full grown lions! She is heading directly towards the characters, so what are they going to do?!

It's then up to the players to

assume their character's personality - be it noble, evil, cagey bold, cowardly – and react accordingly. Their options are limited only by their imagination.

The great imitators

This freedom to decide in  $D \sqrt[3]{D}$ 

the hobby so addictive. Players can act out their fantasies and become someone totally differ-D&D appeared it didn't take long for new games companies to form, and they brought out a whole bundle of FRP games. some have now disappeared off the face of the earth but the more successful still remain. At the moment, the most popular games use. The Middle Earth Role Playing system, or MERP (based on the world of JR Tolkien), Warhammer (Games Workshop's game of mass fantasy combat with some roleplaying elements thrown in), Advanced Dungeons And Dragons (Gygax's more complex, but realistic version of basic D&D) and Battletec, (FASA's massive game of gigantic robot combat).

Although a lot of the early

D&D games were based on swords and sorcery, over the years many different forms of FRP games have emerged to give you the chance to play everything from a prehistoric cave-person to a would-be dictator of the uni-verse in the year 5500AD. The



gamers has never been bigger You can buy roleplaying games (RPGs) which are based on TV programmes like *Dr Who* and films such as *Star Wars*. Alternatively you can try games based on books or comics, such as *Call Of* Cthulhu, inspired by the works of HP Lovecraft, and Marvel Superheroes, which allows you to play your favourite comic book characters. The Orient and Far East have also proved fertile areas for FRP game subjects, so ninja are popular. Bushido is the most established FRP system in this area, but new, simpler systems like Night Of The Ninja are catching up fast.

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No more lonely nights

ness of these games, their one drawback is all the more maddening. This problem is simply that you have to organise a certain group of people to be in the right place at the right time. Obviously if you fancy playing a RPG with your friends at 11 o'clock at night, you're going to be in trouble. The FRP companies, plus other individuals realised this, so a market based around RPGs that could be played anywhere, any place, any time has evolved.

and made certain life-or-death decisions for it. The books have a problems faced by a 15-year-old in a post-nuclear holocaust raph or so you're given a choice of options to take. Depending on what decision you make, you will paragraph in the book, where The paragraphs are numbered for easy reference and you coneither succeed in your mission or die on the way. If you die, you can always restart the game until you succeed. Because of the roleplaying has, it appeals mainly to the younger players, who buy the books by the box full. To give you some idea how popular it is, Joe Dever who is the author of the best-selling Lone Wolf series, has

#### Postal productions

Other companies have concentrated on postal games. Here you Play By Mail (PBM) characters of your creation. Your GM is a away from you – your fellow players could be spread all over

the world. Basically, after you have created your character and it has been placed in the world in which the PBM game is set, you instructions which is processed by either a human GM or a computer. With the use of mystical formulae, dice, computer progyou to enter another set of instructions.

basis until somebody wins the game or your team/character is destroyed trying to achieve its set objective. Each time you have a are charged an amount, which is usually preset and prepaid, and this is debited from your account.

- 'Flight from Darkenwood' by Clyde Caldwell
- The Throne of Istar by Jeff Easley





50p to £5.00 per turn, and are usually the same unless you laborious, or particularly time consuming. However there are many other indirect costs, which you may wish to consider. In every PBM game that I know bar one, contact with other players outside the game is encouraged. By communicating with other players you get to learn more about the game, while making friends at the same time. Basically if your team/character meets another player's team/character, you are given the full details of them. In some cases, if a player wants it to be known, you are given their real life name and address as well. Initially this means writing a few letters each week, and spending a few bob on stamps. However, being first with the news can mean the dif-

a PBM game, so people tend to use the telephone. Again, a few calls each week doesn't cost that much, but say you are playing in a couple of different games OR you get involved in a large alliance, which may sometimes be more than 20 people, then you find the extra costs soon mount

Ind the extra costs solup!

Diplomacy and deviousness is part and parcel of this branch of the hobby, so you may find yourself phoning up your enemies to either feed them false information or extract some interesting news out of them!! At present KJC Games run the most successful computerised PBM, It's A Crime, a game which has been Crime, a game which has been played by over 10000 people. Sloth Enterprises run the equivalent hand-moderated version, with over 1500 players involving

Phoning home

There have been many other forms of FRP created as well These range from Telephone Roleplaying (TRP), which is good fun, but VERY expensive, to Live Roleplaying (LRP), where you actually do it for real. The former works by telephoning a certain number and selecting one of the various options availanumber of the ten available, and through your selection you will achieve various results. It is primarily a hack 'n' slay affair, killing everything in your path. The most popular game at the moment is FIST which costs a mega 38p a minute. Play for an hour and the money you have spent could have bought you a RPG that would give you years of fuel!

LRP is where you really get involved. This means that you get dressed up in the appropriate clothing, obtain various rubber weapons and actually descend a proper set of caves. You experi-ence, the fear, excitement, tension, worry, coldness, the dark and everything else that real life adventuring submits you to. You actually have to get into combat with monster, climb down small, permanently dark tunnels and explore the gloomy depths of the

tioned, you have to play your character, communicate with authentically dressed and interact with your party of adven-turers. The two main LRP companies are The Labyrinthe, which has various bases in the South of England, and The Spirit Of Adventure, who have various locations in and around the Manches er area. An introductory adventure can cost you anything between £6 and £10 per person and

lasts two to three hours.
Another innovation, destined modem. Here you can link your micro up with a mainframe – which may have thousands of other people playing on it – that communicate with the other players if and when you meet them in the game. Alliances can be made with people all over the them accordingly. The biggest game at the moment is *Shades* (recently launched in France), but you can also play some RPGs with such systems as **Prestel** and Micronet.

#### No limits

To be honest, apart from table-top RPGs and LRPs, all the above are not true RPGs as they have their limitations, but they are at least acceptable alternatives. This brings me nicely back to computers. As I said earlier, all the computer games that are mentioned above are NOT real RPGs, as you have limitations imposed upon you. What you have to do is select the best of the bunch, and select a game which gives you the most options.

At the moment there are many computer RPGs on the market, and there are more to come. Some will be brand new, but quite a few will be rereleases of old games which have been improved upon and tarted up a rights to most of their games and they are being programmed as we speak. Activision are going to convert several versions of GW best selling Warhammer game interested in converting such GW products as Bloodbowl, Curse Of The Mummies Tomb, Dungeonquest and Talisman. Infocom have in fact bought the rights to FASA's Battlelec, and the game will be available soon.

On the other hand, Electronic Arts have obtained the rights for Chainsaw Warrior. As you can see, RPGs are being snapped up thick and fast by the top computer companies for conversion and you will see a new breed of computer games on the shelves

At the moment, given the increased software sales of the Spectrum, a lot of the existing computerised RPGs that are not available on a Spectrum's format are being considered for conver-sion. This is the decision facing most of the software houses at the moment and as SSI's Pool Of Radiance sold 90000 units in the USA on the Commodore alone, making it the biggest-selling Commodore US computer game ever. I think Spectrum owners should soon be pleasantly surprised



TIGER ROAD. An ancient tale from ancient China ... birthplace of martial arts disciplines. As Lee Wong you must halt the savagery of ruthless Ryu Ken Oh by overcoming flying Ninja warriors, awesome dragons and acrobatic Sumo wrestlers to name but a few. You'll need all your martial arts training and skill with the spear, chains and sickle to seek out and defeat Ryn Ken Oh in a furious and bloody battle with the scourge of the Orient.

CBM 64/128 £9.99t £14.99d · Atari ST £19.99d · Spectrum 48/128K £8.99t £12.99d Amiga £24.99d · (Tiger Road £19.99) · Amstrad CPC £9.99t £14.99d

# IN-OP POWER"



STREET FIGHTER Travel around the globe and do battle with the best fighters that Japan, Thailand, USA, England and China can throw at you.

plane. Your mission is to destroy the Japanese carrier Yamato. Exhilarating action!



GIANTS OF THE VIDEO GAMES INDUSTRY

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## **SNEAK PREVIEW TAPE**

US GOLD Lift off for top coin-op! Set to rise above the competition this Christmas is US Gold's top arcade conversion Thunder Blade. A CRASH Smash, this non-stop shoot-'em-up pits you against tanks, helicopters, jet fighters, massive bombers and battleships. The battle takes place

over four different landscapes -

THUNDER BLADE

you back several thousand pounds, but for your Spectrum LED Storm's just £8.99 on tape, £12.99 on disk. And the demo's free with your incredible

Christmas CRASH,

urban, rural caverns, jungles/waterways and a massive oil refinery. All four levels are split into three sections, two overhead vertically scrolling and one flying-into-the-screen.

Yes, it's true, Santa's come early to CRASH Towers and all us loyal elves have rushed you yet another fantastic Sneak Preview Tape as fast as possible. Selected to perfectly fit the Christmas spirit we've got the fastest tape ever. Burnt rubber, flashing rotorblades and hammering machine guns, doesn't it just conjure up the festive mood. What?! You've asked Santa for a Cabbage Patch Doll and knitting needles? – Nah, didn't think so.

#### LED STORM GO!/CAPCOM Spaghetti junction blast-'em-up!

Staking out pole position for the ultimate Christmas driving game is this futuristic coin-op conversion. Blisteringly fast on the Spectrum, with some great monochromatic graphics, it takes place on the sky-high interstel-lar flyovers of the future. Kamikaze opponents and skyjack terrorists are

all over the place but you're not stopping for anything.

Your turbo-charged car is heavily armed to blast aggressive lorry drivers trying to run you off the road, bumper boats and frogs which stop you transforming into a jetbike for

LED Storm takes place over nine incredibly dangerous and fast stages, each with its own theme and graphic style. After the first load and level, stages are multiloaded in pairs. The ultimate objective is Sky City.

Programmed by Software Crea-



tions, previously responsible for the Bubble Bobble and Bionic Commando Smashes, hopefully this will be yet another big hit. Uniquely the game will be released simultaneously with the coin-op in early December. The coin-op could set

The demo includes the complete first two sections of the game - one overhead and one behind the copter. Apart from a few tweaks it's just like the one we reviewed, and is VERY tough. Read the Smash review on page 26.

THUNDER BLADE THE May all of us at CRASH Towers take this opportunity to wish every single one of you a very Merry Christmas! CRASH (US GOLD) SNE LED PREVIEW STORM (GO!/ CAPCOM Happy playing!



#### LOADING INSTRUCTIONS

Connect a suitable cassette recorder to your Spectrum. Rewind your Sneak Preview Tape to the beginning. Type LOAD"" on your Spectrum and press ENTER. Press PLAY on your cassette player. cassette player. For more information consult your Spectrum manual.

#### CONTROLS

#### THUNDER BLADE

US Gold

Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair joysticks.

Keys:

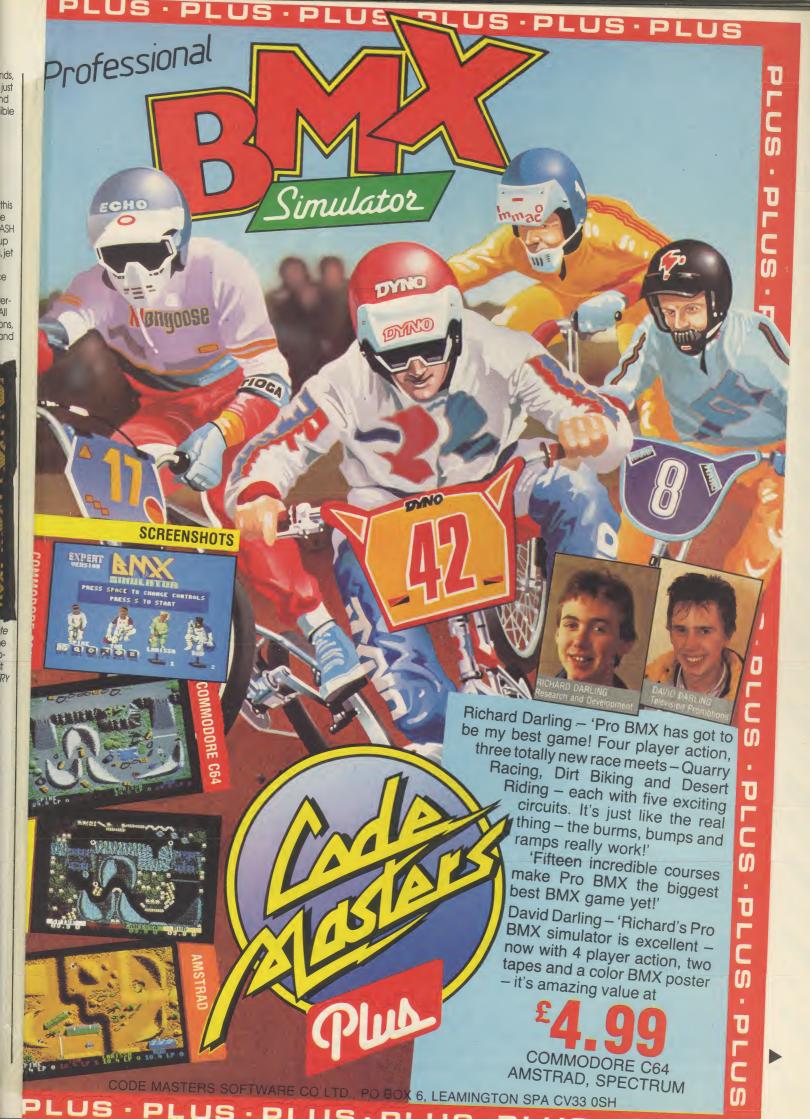
**LED STORM** 

GO!/Capcom

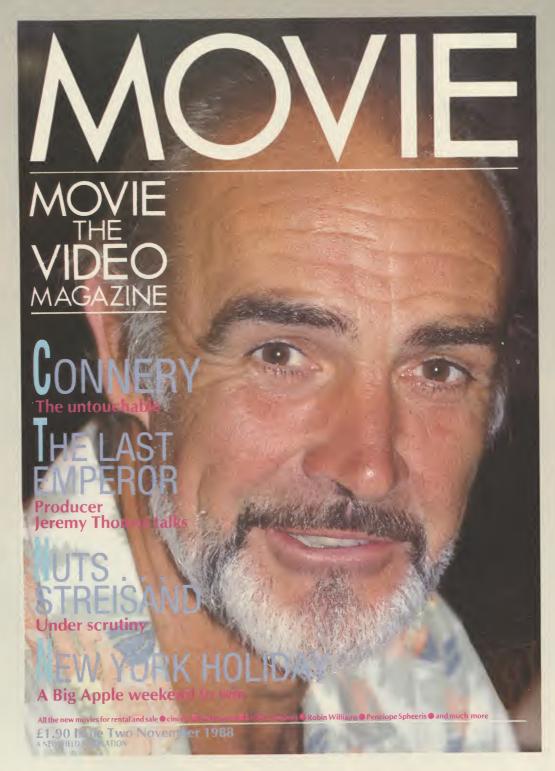
Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair joysticks.

Keys: Definable

See CRASH Issue 59 for more details © 1988 CRASH Ltd.



## Frankie went to Hollywood. Now Newsfield are too.



### MOVIE – The Video Magazine. It's out.

MOVIE is the new monthly for the film and video world, published by the same people as CRASH. Issue Two is out this month — 100 feature-packed pages on who's who and what's what on the screen PLUS a 16-page Francis Ford Coppola supplement, latest in a 12-part serial MOVIE — The Video Magazine. £1.90 from all good newsagents. Subscriptions available — see MOVIE for details.



# 

#### **FOR SALE**

25 assorted original Spectrum games only £30.00. State preference i.e. Arcade, Utility, Adventure or Simulation, or send SAE for catalogue of 200+software to Positive to Posi software tp David Hoolachan, 30 New Barton Street, Salford, Manchester M6

Spectrum 128K with Swift disc drive and interface, Multiface 128, joystick, computer tape recorder and £400 worth original software. All this for £175 ono. Phone: 0703 550796.

Buy Me! Speccy + 48K with £85 worth of software, £40 worth of programmable interface with tape recorder, leads. Contact Adrian after 6pm weekdays, anytime Saturday – Sunday on Mirfield 0924 496136, Huddersfield area. Price negotiable negotiable

Spectrum games for sale: Old and new titles from £1.00 to £5.00 each. Games include: Driller, Dark Side, A.T.F. etc. Send SAE for list to: Stephen Collins, 11 Yellow Pine Way, Chigwell, Essex IG7 4RA

BBC-B issue 7, Opus DPS + Opus, DS/DD 40/80T disc drive, Acorn recorder, books, tapes plus disks (incl. originals) worth 2300. Total package worth over £900. Sell for £440 ono. Phone Chris, Insch (0464) 20432 (evenings).

Back Issues available: CRASH, Your Sinclair, Sinclair User, C & VG, Personal Computer World, Amtix, Practical Computing, Popular Computing Weekly and many others. For more details write to: Karl, 77 Station Road, Finchley, London. N3 2SH.

#### WANTED

Wanted urgently 1 copy of the Crash Tech Tape. I'm getting desperate and will pay £5.95 for it (I only want side 1). Please phone Snape (072888) 379 after 7pm anyday & ask for Angus.

Spec 128 and 48+ B/W TV, recorder. two joysticks, two carrying cases, over 2400 software. Sell for £300. Tel: 0222 568496 Steve or 33 Birchfield Crescent, Canton, Cardiff CF5 1AE

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Speccy +3 with disk drive, joystick, tape leads plus tape deck, all boxed with over 30 games, all original, Road Blasters, Target Renegade, Combat School, Driller etc., tape and disk, £170 Tel: (0942) 606135.

The amazing Remote Control Plug, special price £27.99 plus other electrical equipment. For your free catalogue phone Mercury Electronics 01 940 2644, 260 Kew Road, Richmond, Surrey.

Spectrum 128K, data recorder, £150's Spectrum 12ak, data recorder, £150's worth of good games inc. Starglider, Elite, Exolon, joystick and interface. The lot plus a few mags £200 ono. Armory, 1 Bury Ave, Ruislip, Middx. HA4 7RT.

Address Book program for Spectrum Microdrive owners, excellent value for money at £2.99 from Will Soft, 6 Tower Road North, Heswall, Wirral, Merseyside L60 6RT.

Commodore 128K, MPS801 printer, disc drive, datasette, joysticks, Superbase, Koala Painter, books, tapes, discs, £375 the lot. Contact Dave 021 552 7560

3 great games on one cassette, games are Hangman, Noughts and Crosses, and Battleships. All for the price of £1.50. Send cheques or PO's to Robert Sorfleet, 14 Coniston Ave, Darton, Barnsley, S. Yorks S75 5BB.

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Spectrum +2, Plus D 3 "disk drive, eight disks with disk software, Multiface 128, DK'tronics joystick, interface and £200 of software, £250 the lot. Will separate, 35 Bearwood Hill Road, Winshill Burton or Text. shill, Burton on Trent.

Spectrum 48K+ with new powerpack plus 8 new games all for just £90 ono. Phone: 0454 419948, ask for Nick or write to: 14 Celandine Close, Thornbury, Bristol BS12 1UB.

Sega Master System, £250 worth of games including Rocky, Afterburner, Quartet, Zillion, one year old, vgc. Worth £350, will accept £210 ono. Phone Nik (0296) 86615. All instructions and still beard and still boxed.

Spectrum 48K, 60+ games, 10" B/W T.V., light pen, tape recorder, manuals, ZX Printer, all in good condition. For this bargain at £75 ring Peter on Nottingham (0602) 812081 after 6pm.

For Sale, Combat School, Slap Fight, Top Gun, Convoy Raider, Fourth Pro-tocol, F15 Strike Eagle, very cheap. If interested write to Adrian McDowell, 71 Wakehurst Park, Ballymena, Co Antrim, Northern Ireland BT42 3AY.

Spectrum 48K for sale with DK'Tronics keyboard, AGF programmable joystick interface plus Quickshot II joystick. Will sell for £60 ono. Phone Nick on 0296 612438 after 5pm.

Bargain Pokes, loads of pokes and tips only for 50p. Send SAE and a cheque made payable to R. Grant and J. White to 24 Lancot Ave, Dunstable, Beds. LU6

Original software for sale, titles include Fury, Predator, Flintstones, Street Fighter etc. Also Crash mags One onwards £30.00. Phone Julie B'grove 71612 evenings or write for list to 31 Chadcot Way, Catshill, B'grove, Worcs. B61.0.III Worcs. B61 0JU.

ZX Spectrum+ for sale. Over 40 origi-ZA spectrum+ for sale. Over 40 original games most supplied with pokes etc. Interested? Please contact Stephen Ormston, 96 Stourvale Road, Southbourne, Bournemouth, Dorset BH6 5SB. Please enclose SAE. Rubber Spectrum for sale also!

Spectrum 48K, DK'Tronics keyboard, Wafadrive, 2x128K Wafas, Multiface, Kempston mouse plus Art Studio, arcade style joystick, tape recorder, B/W television, £500+ software, over 100 mags, worth £1000+, sell £350. Call Simon on (0635) 254204.

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48K Spectrum interface, Quickshot joystick, carrying case, games £75. Also other games for sale, popular titles eg. Target Renegade, SAE for details. Stephen Brewer, 72 Noel Rise, Burgess Hill, West Sussex RH15 8BT, (04446) 42836.

Crash Back Issues 18 and 20 to 37, plus original of Elite with Lenslock and all instructions worth £15. Crash Smash Issue 22 £22 ono inc P&P. Ring John (0937) 61816 Now!

Spectrum Plus, Kempston joystick, over £250 software (Zynaps, Enduro Racer, Sentinel, Paperboy, Boggit, Combat School, Leaderboard, Aliens, Trivial Pursuit etc.) – £90. Also Genius Mouse, Artist II, £39 ono, £120 ono the



Artist II cheap, send or write to: The Lab, 81 Hagley Road, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 1QU.

Original Spectrum User manual, orange cover, ring bound etc. up to £5 paid. Also the Century Complete Programming Course for ZX Spectrum Book. Anyone Gottact, JAD, 61 Alear Road, Sheffield S2 2JL.

Wanted Prolog, Sinclair boxed cassette and book. Ring Derby (0332) 31014 after 6pm to discuss price.

Many brand-new Quickshot 2 Turbo joysticks for sale: One for £9.95, two for £18.95. Post and packing free. Please send Eurocheque to Linus Staeffler, Postweg 24, 3452 Kirchbank, West Germany.

Spectrum 128+2, Mulitface 128, joystick, interface and over £1000 worth of latest games for sale. All items are boxed and in perfect condition. Will sell for £350. Ideal Christmas present. Phone Jason on (0762) 336239.

Spectrum 48K games for sale, View to a Kill, Xcel, Rifle Range, Spike, Munchball II, Chiller, Devil's Crown, Incred. Shrinking Fireman, £1.50 each, all for £7.00. Send cheque to W. Inskip, 9 John Street, Port Talbot, S. Wales. Postage 260 per game. Postage 26p per game.

lot. Phone (061) 483 4642 after 4pm.

For Sale: Spectrum +2 including joystick, £250 worth software (incl. Where time Stood Still, Magnificent Seven) all originals, dust cover, good condition £120. Tel 051 334 9303 after 6pm ask for Phillip. Please hurry!

**Spectrum** +3, hardly used, plus some software, Starglider, Leaderboard etc. Give away for the ridiculous low price of £95. Ring John 01 391 4187.

Spectrum 128K+2, joystick, magazines inc. Sinclair User, Your Sinclair, C&VG, £700 of excellent software inc. Cybernoid, Bionic Commando, Platoon, Thundercats, Tai-Pan, IK all original. Boxed and in excellent condition for only £150. Tel (0608),2605.

£3,000 plus of Sinclair Spectrum software for sale, 1,000 various brand new games, excellent graphics, extremely popular with the younger computer user, make ideal gifts. My price only £500, cheapest price anywhere!! Telephone 0306 883942.

Sega Master System includes Light Phaser, three game cassette plus Outrun, Choplifter, World Grand Prix, Hang On. Excellent condition all boxed as new, ideal Christmas present £130 or will sell seperately. Croydon 651 1284.

Very cheap (+some FREE) software for the Spectrum 48K. Games from 1984 -

**CLASSIFIED HEADINGS** 

1988. Send an SAE for a list to Scott Wilding, 20 Nene View, Islip, Kettering, Northants NN14 3LD.

For Sale: Over 150 Spectrum games including Cybernoid, Out Run, Match Day II, Karnov plus many 128K only games including Where Time Stood Still, worth over £800, accept £300 ono. Phone 01 627 2063 after 6.00pm.

Spectrum +2 with over £150 worth of software, Cheetah Joystick and some magazines. In excellent condition only six months old, worth over £300, will accept £180 ovno. Telephone: 01 368 4956 and ask for Ferdose now!

ZX Spectrum+, tape recorder, Turbo II joystick, switchable interface, over £430 original games, many books. The lot worth over £600, sell for £100. Excelent condition, all boxed. Phone Largs (0475) 675581 4-6pm and ask for Jonathan.

Spectrum 128K, Disciple Interface, 3.5" disc drive, 90+ games on discs, 50+ games (cassettes), cassette player, disc holder, joystick (Boss), programming books, printer cable, £200 Fantastic Offer, Ring Mark 01 643 0380

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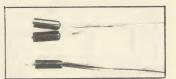
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No 17 June 1985

Denton Designs! Sinclair Story 3! Maps: Knight Lore, Underwurlde! Leonardo graphics! Datel sound sampler! Artist:

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Gremlin Graphics profile! Artist: Bob Wake-lin! Map: Gyron Atrium!

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No 20 September 1985

Pencil Company profile! Maps

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Fanzine File! Microdrive tips! Artist: Susan Fantasy gamesbooks!

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Melbourne House! Computer graphics! Artist: Dave Beeson

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Artist: Oliver Frey! Gargoyle Games profile! Lloyd's Lookback! Hewson profile!

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Playing Tips supplement! Mel Croucher! Imagine profile! PBM convention!

No 28 May 1986 Fanzines! Martech profile! Composite Video Interface! SpecDrum!

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First PBM Mailbox! Homegrown software! Realtime profile! Maps: Cylu, Sir Fred,

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Birth Of A Game! Laser Genius! Maps: Tantalus, Movie!

No 31 August 1986 Software Projects! Word Processing! Maps: Pentagram, Heavy On The Magick! No 32 September 1986 Programmer: Dave Perry! GAC! Maps: Core, Ghosts 'n' Goblins, Bobby Bearing!

Echo Synthesizer!

No 33 October 1986
Programmers: Jon Ritman, Costa Panayi!
Maps: Dan Dare, Cauldron III SpecDrum-

ming!
No 34 November 1986
Programmer: Don Priestley! Genesis
Update! Maps: Dynamite Dan II, Equinox,
Universal Hero! Music Machine!
No 35 December 1986

Designer: Dan Malone! Computer Advertis-ing! Maps: Glider Rider, Thrust, Lightforce! MIDI! Designer: Dan Malone! Computer Advertis-

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Lloyd's Lookback! Spectrum Music! Maps: Scooby Doo, Heartland, Druid!

John Richardson: Jetman! CRASH Reviewers revealed! Match Day Challenge! Maps: aht II. Firelord, Avenger, Dandy!

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Fanzines! Designer: Bernie Drummond!
Maps: Cobra, Impossaball, Uridium! MIDI! No 39 April 1987

Arcades Update! The Z88! Programmer Steve Taylor! Maps: Nosferatu, Double ture Knight, Feud!

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No 40 May 1987 Playing Tips supplement! Maps: Short Cir-cuit, Antiriad, Conquest, Into The Eagle's Nest, Sceptre Of Bagdad, Dragon's Lair II, Thrust II, Fat Worm Blows A Sparky, Tarzan,

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### **GRASSHOPPER'S SONY** Issue 57

Ahh, Grasshopper, what is this? Double Dragon is being converted to the Spectrum by Melbourne House. We gave you two pictures which looked exactly the same, but there were several slight differences which we asked you to circle and send to us on the back of a shuriken star, a soft rubber one, of course, as the real thing is much too dangerous. Even though we were threatened by several ninja chappies (Phil's Gerbil who is trained in the martial art of No Can Do soon sorted them out), a winner was finally chosen. And he is Andrew Barber from Cleethorpes DN35 ON. The lucky devil can now sit in bed and watch all of his favourite TV programmes in comfort on the superb Sony Watchman.

The next 20 names out of the office wok receive a copy of Double Dragon. And here they are...

Joseph Moran, Luton LU2 8QT. Fintan Graham, Co. Antrim BT38 8HA. Brian Buggy, Dublin 7, Ireland. Gary Holcombe. Gwent NP44 3NX. Mr M J Sutherden, Kent DA1 3PL. Adrian Shaw, Marlow SL7 3BU. Stuart Southgate, Doncaster DN4 7QA. Andrew Weller, Nottingham NG5 9DU. Douglas Laver, Portsmouth PO3 6AX. James Pearn, Queenborough ME11 5JX. Mizan Khan, London NW3 2NY. Alex Clark, Southampton SO2 5FS. Duncan Webb, N. Humberside HU20 3UU. Lee Desborough, Leeds LS17 6LH. George Cockerill, Cheltenham GL3 0BG. Stephen Maule, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne NE3 2YH. Christopher Learmonth, Edinburgh EH15 3DS. Anthony Travis, Burnley BB11 5HN. L Grimstone, Rotherham S66 8DG. Stuart McKinnon, Glasgow G32 0TT.

### **HAVE A NICE DAY** Issue 57

Mad Mix Game is the first game to appear from the historic alliance between **US Gold** and **Pepsi-Cola**. To celebrate this earth shattering Pepsi-Cola. To celebrate this earth shattering event we asked you to design the job that Michael Jackson could have ended up with if he hadn't decided to become a pop star. Three winners will receive an all-expenses paid day trip to Metro Centre in Gateshead, along with a US Gold representative and a CRASH celeb, thanks to the world famous US Gold long pocket, short arm fund. The lucky winners will also be provided with £100 spending money (and parental participation is needed, although we unfortunately can't pay them). The lucky three going the Gateshead are 14-year-old Richard Plastow of Herts, Nicholas Jones Bristol (Aged 11) and Mark Endicott

from Romford (13).
25 runners-up will receive a copy of Mad Mix Game and a Pepsi-Cola poster of either Tina Turner, Michael Jackson, or Michael J Fox. The names of the lucky 25 are . . . Simon Aquilina, Hants. Andy Whitaker, Blackpool. Lewis Richards, Hatfield. Herbrand, Germany, James Shephard, Colchester. Simon Dunn, Chorley, Stephen Paralla Glassons Andrew Baker, Davilish Colchester. Simon Dunn, Chorley. Stephen Barclay, Glasgow. Andrew Baker, Dawlish. Alex Fisher, West Gorton. Richard Tanswell, Suffolk. John Hogg, Kilmarnock. E Gillespie, Luton. Sander VD Berg, Hoevelaken, Holland. Greg Wood, Tyne & Wear. Antony Hyde, Brighton. Dean Taylor, Worcester. Simon Penfold, BlackWood, Gwent. Steven Branch, Norwich. Andrew Hill, Ilford. Steven Johnson, Blackburn. Kevin Phillips, Winchester. David Lascelles, South Shields. Justin Mitchell Suffolk. Adrian Shaw, Marlow. Spencer Dix, Tamworth.



### **HOMOPHONIC GORILLA GUERILLAS** Issue 57

Have you any idea what a homophone is? No, neither did I until I looked it up in the LMLWD the other day. It means two words which sound the same, but have different meanings, sound the same, but have dimerent mearings, ie pale and pail, so we gave you five questions with an (a) and (b) clue, and asked you for the homophonic answers. The competition was run for the **Ocean** game *Guerilla War*, but due to a cock-up in communications a cuddly toy gorilla was sent as a prize. So when we manage to prise the gorilla away from the Ed, it will be sent, along with a Guerilla War T-Shirt and a copy of the game, to **Stephen Ovington** of Inverurie AB5 9HS. Five second-prize winners will receive a copy of Guerilla War and a T-shirt, they



### WIN CECCO'S CANON Issue 57

Hello, is that **David Bailey** I see leaping around the office with a flashy **Canon** camera (huh, looks more like **David Bellamy** if you ask me looks more like David Bellamy if you ask me-Andrew Hewson), no it's my old mate Raf Ceco practising his 'I'm a potted plant' impressions whilst taking some wild and whacky photos. Well the gang at Hewson were rather impressed with Mr Cecco's little toy, so they went out and purchased a ultra-cool, and very smart Canon camera to offer as a competition prize. Who is the lucky person who answered the six Raf Cecco questions correctly? Is it Andrew Jolliffe, Sherston SN16 DNQ? Yes—many happy hours clicking Andrew.

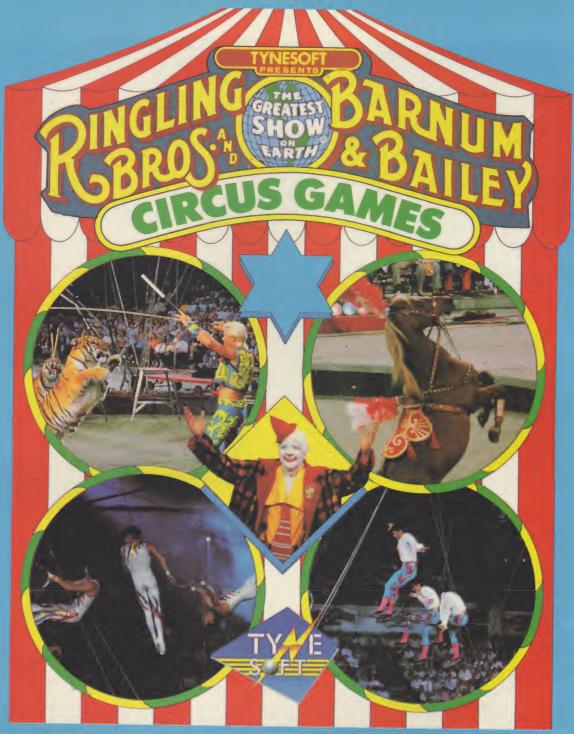
SN1b UNQ?Yes—many nappy nours clicking Andrew.
Also 25 runners-up will receive a copy of Mr Cecco's brilliant sequel to Cybemoid, entitled Cybemoid II. The names out of the hat are . . . Ellen Stuart, Belfast BT36 7MT. Alistair Nelson, Newcastle-on-Tyne NE12 9NR. Tamas Kucsma, London NW8 6RG. Shona

Brunton, Tyne & Wear NE38 7HD. Jonathon Sanders, Dorset BH21 5DR. Richard Dawson, Wolviston TS22 5LV. Chris Evans, Wolverhampton WV11 3SU. Ciaran Richardson, Carlisle CA1 3PU. Guy Rowland, Bishops Stortford CM23 5MH. David Crozier, Houghton-le-Spring DH5 9QY. James Stoddard, Solihuli B90 2HJ. Graham Cresswell, Rugby CV21 1ND. Jeremy Doogan, Portadown BT63 5EH. Stuart Smith, Walsall WS6 6DT. James Rushton, Surrey RH6 7NY. Neil Harper, Falkirk FK1 3BW. Joseph Donnelly, Co. Antrim BT36 7TL. Keith Finnett, Billersay CM11 1NZ. Gary Marr, Sheffield S5 8RP. Othelin, Dublin 14, Ireland. Neil Brunton, Tyne & Wear NE38 7HD. Steven Lau, Warley B65 0EH. Duncan Watling, Ampleforth N Yorks YO6 4DX. Robert Briggs, Humberside HU7 5XR.

### **HAVE AN ACE DAY OUT** Issue 57

It's all in a days work being a Ghostbus . . . . sorry an alien buster, and in the CRASH Smashed Alien Syndrome that is exactly what Ricky and Mary have to do. What do you mean you wouldn't fancy tramping around in all that slime and acidic blood? To tell the truth neither would I. We gave you five multiple choice questions to answer, and being the well-educated lot you are, the postcards floode in. For those of you not paying attention, we will recap the prizes the lucky swi. I mean winner will receive. They will be taken for a day trip firstly to Softek International to see how a big software house functions, then they'll then be whisked to a local arcade to play any coin-op machine they desire (all expenses paid). And at the end of this action-packed day they will be presented with a Compact Disc Player, a Softek game of their choice and an Alien Syndrome poster. The lucky winner is Alien Syndrome poster. The lucky winner is Lloyd King, Chelmsford CM1 4UG. Well done, go to it bug buster!

All winners, please allow 28 days for the delivery of your prizes. All queries regarding competitions run in CRASH should be sent to **The Sticky** Solutions Department, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB. Please don't ring the department as they have enough trouble reading through all your entries as it is.











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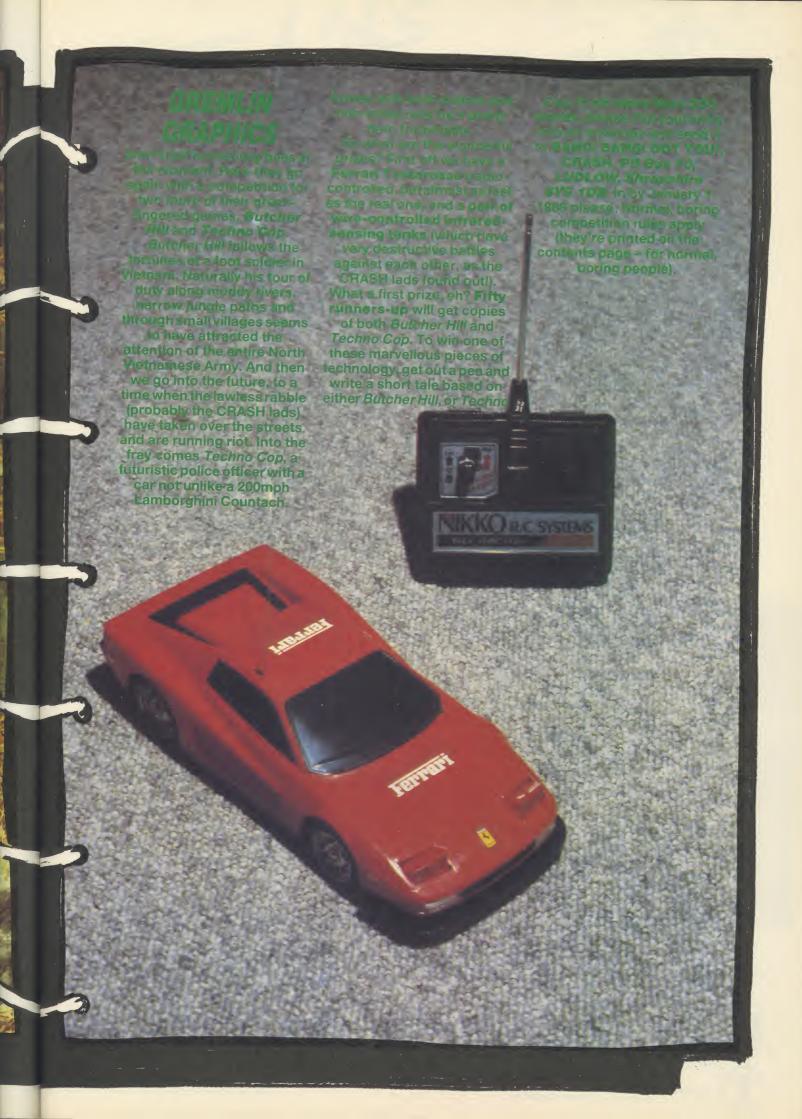
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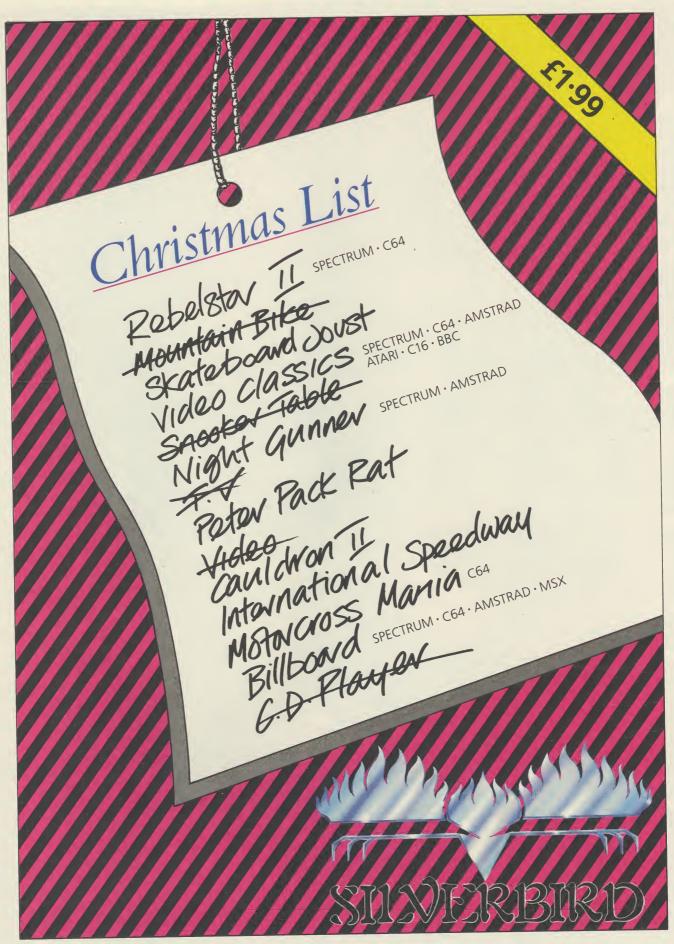
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# What's on your list this Christmas



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No time in December, no rhyme in January.... finally, grandma can't come up with a saying for this month! However, that hasn't stopped you having your say, and though the great sexism debate has died down (was it really much of a debate anyway? most people seemed to be on the same side) the letters continue to fall onto my desk like autumn

Murderous micros, PC Show tedium, the good the bad and the original, golfing technique ... these are the topics of this month's Forum. Now, who can help grandma and send in the best rhyming saying for February and March?

## **BELOW PAR**

Dear Lloyd

I'm disgusted! No sooner has all the latest furore about CRASH covers and certain ads bored everyone into submission, but your own Oli Frey deliberately and premeditatingly stirs up the hornets' nest.

No doubt you've had or will have hundreds of letters complaining about the same thing Issue 47, the cover!

It must surely be he most provocative cover EVER! I mean, the golfer's grip is simply either totally original, or terrible. As any golfer will tell you, the little finger of the right hand should overlap the left forefinger, or interlock with it.

The illustrated grip has no overlap, encouraging excessive use of the right arm and hence causing a severe push or slice, or both, causing the player to suffer a ridiculously high hand-

Secondly, the angle of the arms suggests a very upright swing and stance which would



give a tendency for the club's toe to catch the ground first and twist the face open, once more producing a slice-cum-push to the right.

And lastly the wrists have been 'broken' far too early on the follow-through, causing a lack of control and accuracy, especially with the long irons and woods.

If, heaven forbid, any poor specimen was the model for this debacle, I urge them to arrange lessons with their local teaching professional immediately, before their swing and social life is damaged beyond repair, not to mention the inevitable expense in lost balls!

Ihope I have put Mr Frey right on this crucial blunder, and expect an official apology and assurance that nothing of this sort occurs again, or you can be sure you will lose many disgusted readers, myself included.

John Hay, Sutherland

I gave up golf years ago so I'm not the best one to judge this grave oversight. However, I have passed your letter on to the Sporting Techniques **Accuracy Subcommittee of** the Oli Frey Intermagazine Artistic Management Group. and I am sure you will be hearing from them soon.

Please accept my humblest apologies for this inconveni-

## **NOT SO GREAT**

Dear Lloyd Referring to CRASH's 'All-Time Greats' guide, how can you miss out Manic Miner? It was one of the classic games like Jetpac. The first platform game ever written deserves to be in your guide at least.

If you continue to look through the pullout, you will see Robin Of The Wood. It is one of the most boring games ever, running around a huge maze looking for the bishop to get his cash. This isn't an all-time great, so what is it doing in the magazine?

My top ten games ever are: Dynamite Dan II, Monty On The Run, Pyjamarama, Technician Ted, Marsport, Exolon, Skool Daze, Manic Miner, Jetpac and The Sentinel.

Skool Daze was better than Back To Skool because there

acknowledged, don't they, LLoyd? C Stone, Portland, Dorset

Yes and no. Taste is a personal thing (which is why everyone thinks everyone else is wrong!) and even I didn't agree with all the entries in the All-Time Greats guide. It's the ones they left out rather than the ones they included that cause the problems!

I suppose it would be fairly easy to pick out 60-odd games that made history - genres, graphics techniques etc that hadn't been done before.

But trying to pick put the best games is much more subjective - after all, there have been at least 1,500 Spectrum games released since CRASH and I started!



was more variation in the ways you could blame other people. What a great game

Pyjamarama was - shame it was a bit too easy. Technician Ted was a very hard game, but what an original idea. Marsport was not that big, but the three stages took a long time to complete.

All the games deserve to be

What happened was that Ed Dom and the reviewers sat down together with five years' worth of CRASH, stole bits of Nick's pizza and decided what to put in. They only had 16 pages, after all, so they couldn't include every-



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Par 3	D5	9.9	
Pacmania		5.9	
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## HE'S MAD, HE'S BAD, HE'S SENSITIVE AND CARING

Dear Lloyd

Now what's with the BIG PRINT in the letters pages and huge screenshots of any game which is mentioned - they are hardly necessary are they? So why don't you get rid of them giving more room to print letters?

And on the subject of letters, why not print something instead of the boring arguing about sexism in games? It's so repetitive-the argument has not progressed anywhere since the outcry over the Dun Darach cover ages ago.

Well, here's a new view on it for you.

I must write to complain about the portrayal of men as big strong muscle men armed to the teeth and ready to kill anyone, for example Vindicator, Barbarian and Savage.

It is degrading to man to be shown like this, we are not all big hunks with no brains. I am a sensitive caring person and was offended by the naked muscles shown in Savage. I have burned my copy of CRASH in protest.

Please make sure these disgusting pictures are never printed again.

Not a very convincing argument is it, I certainly don't agree with it, but really it is no different to letters saying pictures of women displaying their sexuality are degrading, which just proves what a useless argument it is.

Well enough of that and onto something else . . . the PC Show. Didn't you think it was rubbish compared to last year's? There were hardly any independent traders selling cheap games which I think is the only thing which makes it worth going, and the lack of a balcony meant you where unable to get a good overall view of the stands and such.

Neil Stone, Abingdon, Kent

WHO ARE YOU **ACCUSING OF BIG PRINT.** YOUNG MAN?



## COMPUTERS - CAN'T LIVE WITH 'EM, **CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT 'EM**

Being a slight bookworm I enjoyed Mel Croucher's Monitor. He had presented a well-written argument supported with interesting, convincing and well-researched facts. So I eagerly waited for his next contribution to the sacred pages of CRASH

On purchasing Issue 56 I ran home and retired to my bedroom for some peace and quiet. I opened and scanned the contents page.

'YAHEY! Monitor's in this month's ish!', I thought happily. So I skipped past all the reviews, competitions and advertisements to page 82 and started reading Monitor.

Shock! Horror! Disappointment! How could Mr Croucher accuse a robot of murder? Any blame for Mr Kenji Urada's death was on himself for not using the provided safety gate. Also, Psychopathic Software proved to be an ill-chosen heading and

Surely Mr Croucher must understand that a computer follows its programme without



deviations. Therefore any mistakes or accidents that occur are due to the programmer's omission of something. Ideally the program should be written to cope with all possible events which have an effect on the running of a program, as a computer can only make the correct decision if it has all the necessary information.

Also, referring to the shooting down of Korean Airlines flight 007, the passenger jet: this event occurred five years ago, not three. I would like to point out also that it was shot down by a Major Vassily Kasmin in a Sukhoi SU-21 Flagon-F jet fighter, and that the Russians' software was indeed not hopelessly slow in response and murderously stupid. If you do not believe me get Issue 3 of Take Off magazine.

However, due to the wit contained in the story of the angry unemployed man in his quest of revenge against a second-generation industrial robot, and in the quotation by Malcolm X. 1965, I know I will be unable to stop myself buying the next



issue of CRASH, especially since I hope to find my letter in it!

What more can I say except . . . the new reviews look great, the competition prizes are amazing and I can't wait to get the next issue of CRASH. Sean Barry, Mitchelstown, County Cork, Eire

PS: I'd better say HI! to everyone who knows me or my life will not be worth living.

It probably isn't after ticking off Mel Croucher anyway.

I agree with you that it's really programmers and not computers which are to blame for 'computer disasters' - but sometimes, mind you, it isn't even the programmers themselves. It's the people who give them the specification of

what the software should do.

You can't expect an expert programmer to also be an expert in military strategy; he has to be told about that by the

As for the case of Kenji Urada, if there's any blame it should surely rest with management who may not have adequately taught their employees how to deal with the robots.

That incident reminded me of the film Westworld, which you may have seen - where a Disnevland-like entertainment park is 'manned' by robots which go berserk.

And yes, Mel was definitely wrong about the date of the Korean shootdown.

## RIGINAL

I'm writing mainly to criticise a few points raised by Andrew Chapman in his article Seen It All, Done It All in Issue 57. He

seems to be blindly in favour of originality (although he does remark that some original games aren't too hot) with a few excep-

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One of these quoted was Uridium, as he said that it was the best plan-view shoot'-emup around. By this, I take the implication that Mr Chapman is saying 'Uridium is the best, so why bother with any others?

Uridium was certainly not the first plan-view shooter, so if someone had said the same about earlier games then it might not have come along.

I read somewhere (can't remember where, exactly) that there are only seven ideas for a game. I don't think there is such a thing as total originality: even Driller and Dark Side are, essentially, collect'-em-ups in 3-D.

The look of an idea may change, giving it an original appearance, but this is purely aesthetic and should not sway anyone's judgement. Head Over Heels wasn't all that different from Knight Lore, Alien 8 and a load of other isometric games in appearance (although the graphics were better), but it is sufficiently varied and playable to be great fun.

I think there's no point in criticising software companies for producing the same types of games over and over again. They're in the business to make money, not to make people happy, and they obviously wouldn't still churn out shooter after shooter if the public weren't interested.

Finally, I thought the PC Show was a bit flat: everyone's showing videos and what-have-you for their Christmas blockbusters, but there seem to be very few games actually finished. I think the Show should be moved to the end of November, as the Christmas rush will be well under way and the public will be able to see the stuff coming out, rather than just gawp at the arcade machine/film etc.

Ewan Dalton, Irvine, Ayrshire

Are Ewanew staff writer or do you just like sending letters?

'Originality' is a much-misused word. Of course the idea of a shoot-'em-up isn't original, but the way it's implemented can be original.

And just as you say, Driller and Dark Side don't have original plots - they just present an old game form in a very new

If originality was the only basis on which we judged things, we would have thrown out Shakespeare's plays long ago (no doubt pleasing to anyone studying English)! They were all based on old, familiar plots even 400 years ago, but Shakespeare managed to present - write - them in a much better way.

To go a bit further ahead in history, this obsession with originality is a pretty recent disease. Until the 19th century, old-fashioned was regarded as good while people turned their noses up at new, different things - in music, writing and so on, at least. And the same would have been true of Spectrum games if they'd had them.

Let's hope for a cure soon! As for the PC Show, I have to say I agreed with you (and the others who wrote on this subject) . . . partly. The big releases are getting later and later every year, which means there aren't so many available at the Show.

But on balance I preferred the new Earls Court hall to the old Olympia site, and there were certainly some beautiful stands this year. Did you notice the Psion one just inside the main entrance?

LM

Whew - all that erudition makes me tired. Time for a cup of cocoa and a quick scan of the Daily Telegraph before grandma steals the TV page. I seem to have spent most of my time lately cycling between the cottage and the Towers, but as winter draws on in my remote part of the Welsh border hills that will have to stop.

Ed is trying to persuade me to buy a car, but I don't have any patience with the things. They're almost as bad as word processors.

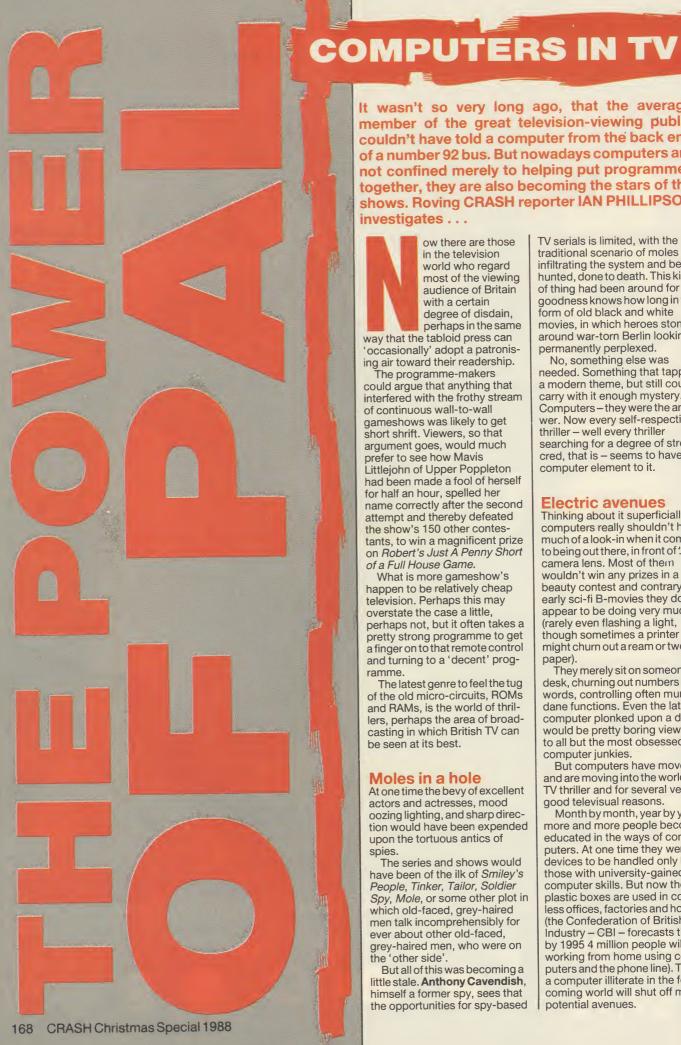
Why is everyone so mad about state-of-the-art technology these days? All I really need is a bicycle, a Spectrum, and the old Hermes, for answering letters on.

Send yours to:

**LLOYD MANGRAM'S FORUM CRASH** PO BOX 10 LUDLOW SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB

... and see you next month (or maybe at the ZX Microfair).





It wasn't so very long ago, that the average member of the great television-viewing public couldn't have told a computer from the back end of a number 92 bus. But nowadays computers are not confined merely to helping put programmes together, they are also becoming the stars of the shows. Roving CRASH reporter IAN PHILLIPSON

ow there are those in the television world who regard most of the viewing audience of Britain with a certain degree of disdain, perhaps in the same way that the tabloid press can occasionally' adopt a patronising air toward their readership.

The programme-makers could argue that anything that interfered with the frothy stream of continuous wall-to-wall gameshows was likely to get short shrift. Viewers, so that argument goes, would much prefer to see how Mavis Littlejohn of Upper Poppleton had been made a fool of herself for half an hour, spelled her name correctly after the second attempt and thereby defeated the show's 150 other contestants, to win a magnificent prize on Robert's Just A Penny Short of a Full House Game.

What is more gameshow's happen to be relatively cheap television. Perhaps this may overstate the case a little, perhaps not, but it often takes a pretty strong programme to get a finger on to that remote control and turning to a 'decent' prog-

The latest genre to feel the tug of the old micro-circuits, ROMs and RAMs, is the world of thrillers, perhaps the area of broadcasting in which British TV can be seen at its best.

### Moles in a hole

At one time the bevy of excellent actors and actresses, mood oozing lighting, and sharp direction would have been expended upon the tortuous antics of spies.

The series and shows would have been of the ilk of Smiley's People, Tinker, Tailor, Soldier Spy, Mole, or some other plot in which old-faced, grey-haired men talk incomprehensibly for ever about other old-faced, grey-haired men, who were on the 'other side'.

But all of this was becoming a little stale. Anthony Cavendish, himself a former spy, sees that the opportunities for spy-based

TV serials is limited, with the traditional scenario of moles infiltrating the system and being hunted, done to death. This kind of thing had been around for goodness knows how long in the form of old black and white movies, in which heroes stomp around war-torn Berlin looking permanently perplexed.

No, something else was needed. Something that tapped a modern theme, but still could carry with it enough mystery. Computers - they were the answer. Now every self-respecting thriller - well every thriller searching for a degree of street cred, that is – seems to have a computer element to it.

### Electric avenues

Thinking about it superficially, computers really shouldn't have much of a look-in when it comes to being out there, in front of 'ne camera lens. Most of them wouldn't win any prizes in a beauty contest and contrary to early sci-fi B-movies they don't appear to be doing very much (rarely even flashing a light, though sometimes a printer might churn out a ream or two of paper).

They merely sit on someone's desk, churning out numbers and words, controlling often mundane functions. Even the latest computer plonked upon a desk would be pretty boring viewing to all but the most obsessed of computer junkies.

But computers have moved and are moving into the world of TV thriller and for several very good televisual reasons.

Month by month, year by year, more and more people become educated in the ways of computers. At one time they were devices to be handled only by those with university-gained computer skills. But now these plastic boxes are used in countless offices, factories and homes (the Confederation of British Industry - CBI - forecasts that by 1995 4 million people will be working from home using computers and the phone line). To be a computer illiterate in the forthcoming world will shut off many potential avenues.

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The One Game's Stephen Dillon encounters a blind man. Friend or

To others who don't know the first thing about them, computers still have a clinical mysteriousness that only adds to the drama of a programme, as long as people don't feel they are having the wool pulled over their eyes, and being blinded by science. So what we have is a world in which more and more people are becoming knowledgeable about computers and able to understand the jargon and significance of actions in a technology-orientated TV plot.

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The second, and probably prime reason producers pick up on the computer world relates not so much the what computers are, but what they can do.

Corks in Zanzibar

As everyone reading this magazine knows, essentially computers are very useful in generating and transmitting information, and as we all know, Information Technology (IT) is the buzz word of the moment. Computers and computer systems create those very conditions that make for good thrillers -somebody tries to do something, somebody else tries to stop them. In the words of one anonymous writer for television ... in television film there's only one plot. There's a guy in Zanzibar with a cork up his bottom. There's only one guy in the world who can get it out and he lives in Newark, New Jersey. We spend the next fifty minutes seeing the second guy fighting overwhelming odds to reach the first before he dies of toxic poisoning. OK?'

Perhaps the context maybe slightly different, a few twists here, a few twists there, but basically it's the plot you'll find in computer thrillers. Simple isn't

All you have to do is look at the stories breaking in the quality press, let alone in the rarified atmosphere of the trade and technical press and you can see opportunities for future programme makers and writers.

The contemporary world cannot function without computers, but their non-human element, their ability to do things quickly, their skill in 'not making mistakes' which are their strengths are also their weaknesses.

### Duodenal ulcers

These days the scope for the computer-based programme is vast, there are just so many applications for computers in the modern world: At the beginning of the year, such a quality paper as The Sunday Times was running a story headlined Computers hit by mystery bug -the virus, that can be added to a computer by by disaffected employees or saboteurs that, will eat at a computer's very heart and soul, eventually turning it into a metallic corpse. Data is destroyed, information corrupted, systems break down, deals are lost weapons guidance systems go down. Chaos reigns.

Remember, computers run the financial world, shifting billions of dollars pounds, francs and Deutschmarks across continents, between one account and

another in less than the blinking of a gnat's eye and as easily as moving a feather. The share crash in America last year is said to be in part the result of 'programmed trading' - computers spot minor, but profitable, fluctuations in share prices and blitz in with numerous trades;

-can be used to manipulate and instantly recall vast quantities of information on any individual; Government departments to collect, store, collate and analyse the vast quantities of information upon all of us which come from their official forms. To many that information can be damaging when correct, but often it is far more damaging for people when that information is wrong. And anyone who has tried to correct erroneous information held about them on computer knows just how difficult that can be to do.



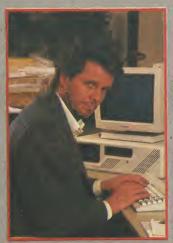
Taking decisive action -Menace Unseen

 control a country's military defence system because the response time required is too fast for the human brain to take in all of the information and reach the correct conclusion, the trouble is very often neither do computers. Periodically we can read newspaper reports of how due to computer error we came almost to the brink of a new world war.

large and small companies use them to make business decisions where millions of pounds, thousands of jobs and countless anxiety induced duodenal ulcers are at stake.

Computers are powerful and getting more powerful by the month, and those that control them can have awesome power too, and power corrupts. Greed, crime, money, ruthlessness are its consequence. No wonder they became grist to the TV mill. With all of these implications the seeds of a new thriller series are

## **COMPUTERS IN TV**



Jean Michel Jarre lookalike -Menace Unseen

Porcine and bespectacled

Two programmes were created at about the same time, appear to have spawned the genre of computer thrillers. The Consultant based upon the book by John McNeil and starring Hywell Bennet, explored the possibilities of computer fraud, which in the early Eighties was just appearing. The premise of the programme was simple, what happens if the computer expert you send in to investigate commuter fraud is bent himself?

But it is Bird of Prey which made the first real impact. It appeared upon our screens on 1 April 1982, but certainly it proved to be no April fool joke, as it became an unexpected winner in the ratings list. Again it was a series that looked at fraud, this time upon a European scale. Porcine and bespectacled Richard Griffiths took the lead, operating as an adequate, but not brilliant computer expert. Griffiths becomes convinced of his superior's willingness to dip into the kitty. That knowledge puts not only his life, but those who know him, at risk. The dramatic quality of the show, its acting and haunting theme music against a backdrop of a wolf working its way ever closer to a victim in computer game maze unsurprisingly led to the sequel, Bird of Prey 2.

Thus it was really Bird of Prey that opened up the field, and revealed the possibilities of computers forming the structure for a mainstream TV programme. The series was a hit. It proved to the general public and probably more importantly to the TV programmers, that computers could be interesting and could form a good basis for our

evening viewing.
Perhaps it didn't matter too much if not all of the audience understood all that was going on. That never stopped Tinker Tailor, Soldier, Spy with all of its intricacies being compulsive watching for millions. Good acting and writing, the pace of the direction and the flow of the programme could make up for all of that.

That early piece of computer action has been followed in more recent months by offerings from the independent stations of Anglia, Central and Granada Televis-

**Explosive computers** 

Anglia's Menace Unseen, is at heart a story of murder and mystery. It sees lan Ogilvy flick aside his Saintly halo to take on the role of computer good guy Duncan Free, avenging the death of his business partner (killed by the explosion of his sabotaged computer) by unraveling a cat's cradle of illegal, secret deals. Judi Bowker as widow of the murdered computer boss, Robert Shriving, adds suitable romantic appeal.

Ogilvy himself is not computer-literate and thus reveals that attitude with which he went into the series, 'the secret of looking as if you know what you're doing with a keyboard is just to move your fingers over it very quickly

(Thie onnly tooubble with doing thuws ias thaty in real lifew you caab makew a few misitakleks.)

The message, if there is one, from this three-part series is that an individual can so easily be pinned like a butterfly by the distorted and corrupt use of information held about them. With databases becoming ever more massive, and accessible by secret services and business empires alike - no-one is truly safe.

numbingly complicated.

Fairling has been using Revol 3 - a fifth generation computer, 'fast, intuitive, unbelievable . . . the best' which he manages to divert.

Fairling's aim is basically simple, to introduce complex codes the Paradise Program - that would break down the logic systems of the large megacomputers of the superpowers, 'he decided to try and drive a computer mad'. In this aim he is supported by left-wing terrorists and activists.

And as Home Office boss Clive Rawlinson puts it, 'The position here is that this merry little band of anarchic lunatics is now running around with the world's cleverest computer and one of the few men in the country who actually knows how to use

the damned thing.

As an anonymous Californian programmer puts it, 'To err is human, but for a real major league cock-up you need a computer.'

Max Raines, a reluctant investigator is pressured into taking the case by the Home Office -'He's obsessional, depressive,



▲ Tense City action in Wipe Out

### Insane computers

Wipeout is Granada's contribution to the computer TV thriller, screened this summer. Scientist John Fairling is researching into artificial intelligence and the human mind at a high security prison.

A riot occurs.

The subsequent enquiry is told that a 'deliberate attempt has been make to warp the personalities' of the prisoners. What's more Fairling is missing.

Not only has he gone walkabout, but he has electronically 'ghosted' himself, having hacked into every databank in the UK and erased all of the files held upon him.

Add a linkage to underworld figure Harry Kaylan, arms dealing and big business, and things are beginning to get mindverging on the paranoid, in other words he's exactly what we want'. lan McElhinney takes the

▼ What do you mean it won't run Manic Miner? - Wipe Out



Raines gets hold of the program, but decides not to hand it over to his bosses. Instead he tries to discover its secrets himself. At this point he becomes surplus to Home Office requirements.

Surviving their attempts to dispose of him, Raines gets to Fairling, who has already started injecting the Paradise Program into Britain's military communications system. At a crucial moment his efforts are jammed, giving armed troops the time they need to break into Fairling's bunker, slaughter nearly everyone there and save the world.

## **Computerized** hobbits

Central TV's 1988 four part series, **The One Game**, doesn't look at such big issues as the other programmes, taking things down to a more personal level

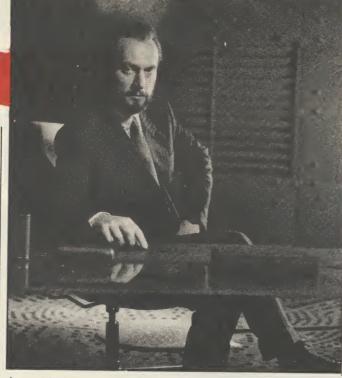
It's billed as a new form of television drama by the station – a fantasy thriller. And what is a fantasy thriller? Let the show's producer **Deidre Keir** explain: 'To me it means brainache. To create *The One Game* we broke down barriers between straight forward thrillers and surreal fantasies'.

The plot of *The One Game* begins with a 'simple' computer fraud. Sometime between drinking his evening Ovaltine and guzzling the morning cornflakes £2 million disappears from the bank account of a games company owned by Nick Thorne. Poetic justice perhaps for Thorne (played by **Stephen Dillon**) who has ripped off a lot of games inventors to generate that now vanished wealth.

But the situation is just a little more serious, for someone is playing with the firm's computers. 'Nick', Keir continues, 'discovers that his former partner Magnus (the excellent **Patrick Malahide** - *Minder*'s frustrated Inspector Chisholm) has set him a series of games to play, which he calls *The One Game*.'

'Magnus has decided that people should get up from their games boards and computer terminals and play games in real life. The problem for Thorne is that he doesn't know who is and who isn't a player. A man in the street might be a bystander or he could be a player with a weapon under his coat'.

This is the 'ultimate reality game' and Thorne's participation in it is ensured by the kidnapping of his wife and the sabotage of his business. (For



Patrick Malahide as the mean and avenging Magnus in Central's The One Game

those of you with a liking for history/myth, *The One Game* was based by its writer, John Brown, on the legend of King Arthur).

### **Retarded computers**

Though some good series, even excellent ones (*Bird of Prey*) have been created, as yet the computer thriller is still really in its infancy, and paradoxically enough that's where it might stay. A child that never grows up.

With computers now rather everyday things, almost mundane pieces of equipment, producers may look to incorporate them into a wide range of programmes, rather than using them as a central theme. The spy, government investigator or saboteur will use them to help him perform his task, but the computers will be only tools, mentioned and seen in passing. If that happened computers will be reduced from starring parts to walk on roles. But, if the advances in computers gather a pace and if the viewing public become hooked on the 'keyboard and boxes', who knows perhaps we'll be hearing pleas on Points of View, more computers on TV - please, PLEEFSE

But probably in the wilds of Golders Green at this very moment sit a horde of balding writers, hunched over their word processors, carving out fresh scenario after fresh scenario all set to make that theory wrong. Looking forward, the straightforward criminal element may well to a large extent be remove from forthcoming series in which computers play big roles. The world of medicine - using computers to diagnose medical problems and give out the bad new; and the financial world, especially after last year's crash are the most likely targets.

As scripts become leaner, less wordy, the demand for action becomes greater. The visual image does so much without the actors. Perhaps this points forward to the ultimate computer thriller, when not only are computers and what they can do an integral part of the plot, computers themselves take all of the parts and no human actor or actress struts the boards.

But as with many other things, cost more than public opinion and creative desire may be the limiting factors. A computer thriller, along with any other drama, could cost £200,000 or so . . . an HOUR! Compared to the £20-30,000 spent per hour on sport, that comes pretty expensive.

However, with the growth of satellite broadcasting and cable TV, there is an insatiable need for more and more programmes, to add to the four channels' present weekly output of 525 hours or so.

So, if you think that you know enough about computers or can find out enough, and think you can pen a good yard, why not bombard the BBC or ITV with a script or two. Who knows, you might not get an acceptance straight away, but if you can come up with the goods, I for one would not mind seeing a few more good computer thrillers on TV

But heed well the words of **Michael Waring**, producer of *Bird of Prey*, 'You can't sell these programmes [computer thrillers] on technical issues alone. As with any drama, you need a human dimension to rake you through the story'.

So why not load up those WP packages or just use a notebook and pen and get scribbling. You've got to start somewhere . . .



▲ There aren't any rules. You could be playing every minute of the day and not know it



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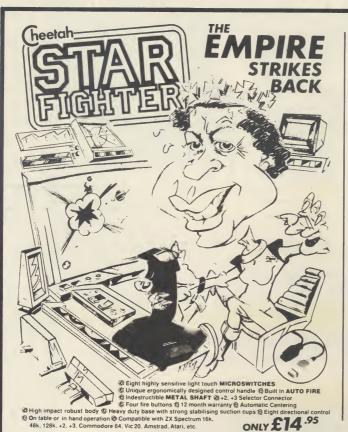






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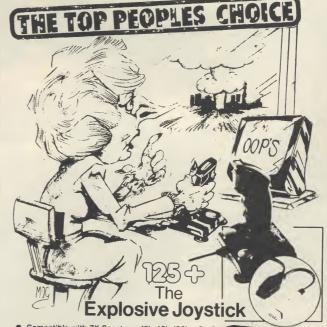
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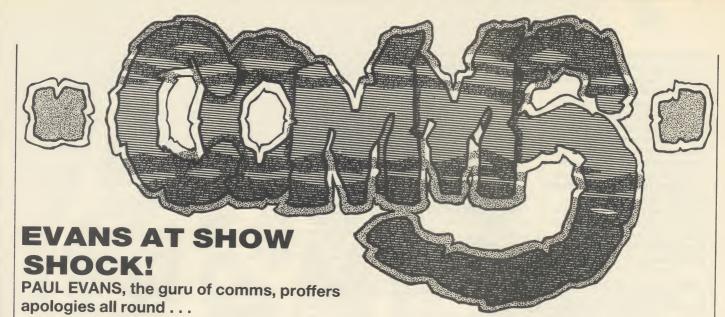
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III be





I, THERE. I'm sorry, but the postal strike had the last laugh and last month's article didn't make it despite various attempts! So here comes last month's article, together with this month's one as well-two for the price of one a three-quar-

### IT'S SHOW TIME

First off here's my account of the PC Show, written at 1:15am on the following Sunday morning. And I was certainly right about the scene at Liverpool Lime Street Station. Loads of PCers all jumping on the 07:10 to London Euston. I got chatting to a lot of them over a BR Bacon/Lettuce/Tomato sandwich (never again!) and they all were happy with both my articles and the mag as general. (I'm surprised they knew who you were – Ed.) A big HI to them! Once there I dashed for the Telemap stand to see what they had to offer.

The first person I met was the one and only David Rosenbaum (Ta-Daa!), he being the public relations kind of guy! I was presented with a smart press pack and told of the latest expansions of what must be the most successful English communications group. Here's what I discovered

First, two items that will be of limited interest to most of you. Telemap are launching a new business service called Interbusiness. It's described as 'a unique online advice service for the business user'. Telemap has linked up with the Legal Protection Group to provide a team of specialists who will answer questions on taxation, law and employment. All you have to do is send a question and the reply will be sent within 24 hours! The service will also provide articles on current business topics and techniques to aid the up-andcoming businessman (like myself). These will cover most aspects from finance to sales.

'Existing online service are aimed at specialist markets', said Gerard Richardson, Business Development Director of Telemap Group. 'Interbusiness is different. It is a small service, of interest to everyone in business from the small businessman without easy access, to a team of specialist advisers, to a manager in a company who needs to know the latest market developments. The service is due to be launched in the late Autumn, more details of costs, etc when I know.

The next item is 16-bit (arrgghh!!) but does contain some 8-bit (hurrah!) news as well. Micronet is setting up a gateway (an all-formats store selling lots of veg and groceries? - Ed) for telesoftware so they can offer it FREE (yippee). The biggest news, however, is that Micronet are offering for the first time, 16-bit telesoftware!! Again, for free! 8-bit software is also included in the new service, but Micronet are really excited about the 16-bit offer! (So are you, if the number of exclamation marks is anything to go by, Paul - Ed.) With the wide range of free downloadable software now available on our weekly online magazines dedicated to these machines, Micronet offered the most comprehensive service for the 16-bit user,' raved Mike Brown, Technical Director of Telemap Group.

### **GOLD SHADING**

Now on to something that never seems to stop growing -Shades! That ever-popular multi-user game is spreading like crazy! Now it's available on Telecom Gold. For the first time, Gold's 105,000 subscribers have a chance to join in Europe's most popular online adventure. What's more, it costs no more to use at peak hours (8am-7pm) than the standard Gold charge of 61/2p a minute. When off-peak, there is a surcharge of 41/2p per minute on top of the 2p per

minute Gold charge. The launch onto Telecom Gold means that the game can now be played at 300, 1200/75, 1200 and 2400 baud rates

Also, don't forget that Shades is available to non-subscribers as well by phoning

0898 10 0890, but watch the phone bill (25p off-peak, 38p peak).

John Tomany, Managing Director of Telemap Group, says Shades is a proven success story with users already clocking up over 4000 hours per week through Micronet, Prestel and the 0898 network. By going onto Telecom Gold we are doubling the potential user base, which not only makes sound commercial sense, but can only add to the excitement of the game'.

Well, will it be long before EVERYONE is playing Shades? Anyway, watch out for the latest advertising campaign!

### **PARLEZ VOUS** FRANCAIS?

Finally, Telemap Group is launching a second sister company in France. Already, users in Italy have been able to share the wonders of Micronet in a similar version called Lasernet. The new company, **Telemap SARL** is based in Paris and is launching a French version of Micronet onto Minitel, the French equivalent of Prestel.

Minitel is one of the biggest computer online databases, having four million terminals throughout France. Its growing popularity is due to strong government support, which we are sadly lacking in this country. Micronet claim to be building themselves up to dominate the market when the deregulation of Europe takes place in 1992.

'France presents a major opportunity for Telemap Group,



▲ John Tomany: Micronet's man of many words

said John Tomany (talkative fellow, isn't he!). 'Despite the huge number of users, and the range of services already found on Minitel, we have developed a number of advanced products which will be new to the French. Telemap Group intends to become a major player in the French videotex market.' Powerful stuff, eh? Guess what the first Telemap product on Minitel will be? Yep, Shades!

If you want more information on Micronet, write to Telemap Group Ltd, Durrant House, 8 Herbal Hill, LONDON EC1R 5EJ. © 01 278 3143

## AND NOW FOR SOMETHING ELSE

That's all (phew) from Telemap Group. Now it's indie time. Whilst browsing among the various mini-stands for user-groups I finally came across details of the database that **Peter Gabriel** (who I did finally get to see at the Amnesty concert) and **Howard Jones** have helped to set up.

It's called GreenNet, and describes itself as 'The global network for environment, Peace and Human Rights'. It allows you to communicate, share information, pool resources and plan events with individuals and groups anywhere in the world. It also has an international bulletin board and mailbox system so you can easily find information on anything from acid rain to the SDI system! The system claims to be cheap to use, allowing you to send telexes anywhere in the world for only pence per page. It also provides a wide range of services designed specifically to meet the needs of environment and peace groups.

GreenNet is a non-profit organization and part of the Association for Progressive Communications, giving access to PeaceNet, EcoNet, GeoNet, InterDoc and Poptel. It relies on donations to keep running, as well as subscriptions, of course. As for costs, it's free to join, but you have to make a £30 deposit against your first few bills. Subscriptions are £5 a month and connection costs 9p a minute.

UK electronic mail is free, and a 200 word message to the USA costs only 50p! So, what does the great man think?

'Information is power. Much of the information revolution grew in the womb of the military and the multinationals. It's time to take it into the hands and homes of the people and to make it very accessible to those working to improve the world. GreenNet deserves to succeed,' Peter Gabriel was heard to utter. (And all in one day. That must be a miracle.)

To get an application form, write to *GreenNet*, 26 Underwood Street, LONDON N1 7JQ. 201 490 1510. I'll find out more for a full review on the subject.

Besides the things I have mentioned, there was very little going on in the comms world at the show, unlike last year.

ClubSpot 810 were showing off there latest databases for Prestel, as well as advertising the biggest adventure meet yet (a job for Samara there!). However, most of the comms areas were aiming at the business market, hope there's a bit more leisure next year!

### MOAN, MOAN, MOAN!

I've received a letter from one Philip Green from Rotterdam who supports my hatred of junk mailboxes (see Issue 56). He lists his many complaints of the Dutch viewdata systems on which he receives a lot more junk mail than us! However, some of the mail is of dubious content and this has resulted in Philip banning his son from logging and collecting messages. He said that the service planned to introduce a system preventing junk mail being received . . . but a year on, nothing has happened. Thanks for the mail. Philip. I certainly agree with your complaints and will ask Prestel about it for next month's issue. As for modems, I intend to have a look at the field soon but as you pointed out, the scope is very limited, especially for the 48K machines. In the meantime, I

second Philip's motion – junk mailbox the Prestel Customer Services with complaints. I really am sick of these mailboxes!

But enough moaning, I've been waffling on for ages about computing areas on Micronet and Prestel, but rarely mention the normal habits of your average teenager. Music, films, nightlife etc. So, how can Prestel help?

### ET AL II

Let's start the music. How does your average heavy metal nutter enjoy himself on Micronet. Well, there's an ideal section called Aard Rock (★aard#). It's a general music area, content structure being similar to 20th Century Hamster (a games/competition base). The main menu presents all the features you would expect to find: a top ten of singles and albums, reviews, news, videos, features and competitions. (I entered a competition for a pair of J M Jarre tickets, and didn't win.)

The section's well laid out and colourful. Problem is it suffers badly from updating (for instance, it's now mid-October and the charts were last updated during September!) However, it does contain a wide range of interesting features (such as group biographies and gig guides) and there's even a letters section. The name Aard Rock is slightly misleading as you

do is get comfy with a few cans of Cola and type away! There's a good chatline, agony aunt page, not-so serious agony aunt page, news, letters and general abuse of all that Prestel stands for morally! Meets are often held around Britain (London mostly) which involve vast amounts of ale quaffing. (And no, I'm not telling Nick Roberts where they are.) To join, you have to register after midnight. Just type ★tmmc# (The Midnight Micronetter's Club) and watch the fun unfurl before your eyes!

## THE LAST OF THE DINOSAURS

Included among this month's letter is an interesting one from Mr K McDermott who owns a ZX Spectrum 16K (they still exist?) and wants to know if a VTX modem will run on it with no problems. In answering this question, there's good news and bad news. The good news is that you can use the VTX completely safely with a 16K and enjoy Micronet to the full. The bad news is that you will have to put up with the rather naff terminal software held in the ROM. My advice is to get a 48K and buy a copy of VTX Editor (available on Telesoftware) which is a far superior package including editing and mailboxing facilities offline! Contact Micronet for more details! They offer free



Prism's VTX 5000: the only choice for your Spectrum (16K included)

expect a heavy metal section. Still, try it!

Ok, what's next? If you like films then you've come to the right place. There are many database on the system for film buffs of all breeds! Try \*films# or \*cinema# and you're away! Details can be sought on the latest releases and where they're showing. Some cinemas even allow you to book tickets online!

Nightlife? Loads! Many details can be digested all about nightlife – only in and around London, sadly. And then there's the only online nightclub! All you have to modem deals with most yearly subscriptions.

Well, that's all for now! I'll see you next month, when you might get to see a picture of my bedroom-cum-office!! If you want to prevent this terrifying expose, or just let off steam about the comms world in general, then why not write to or MBX me? My MBX number is 219995412 and to send a letter, just use the CRASH address! That's Paul Evans, Comms, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB. See you next month and Happy Christmas!

## **SHADES**

"Shades has become a way of life for it's users .... it has created it's own universe" — Paul Evans — Crash

Ordinary adventure games just won't feel the same again, when you've played Shades — THE multi user adventure game.



# BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO PBM you'll probably be able to find a similar PBM game. If you haven't found it yet then don't worry,

To complement this month's introduction to RPG, IAN LACEY has been arm-twisted into giving an overview of PBM for those not already addicted. But first, the miserable young so-and-so has a whinge about Christmas...

year again, when all those annoying cards with horrible, sickly covers start clogging up the post. Turn results with strict deadlines are lost in the flood and we PBMers are forced back to our computer or board roleplaying games. So if you're new to the hobby, and send off for a couple of the cheapo games below, expect a delay!

### WHAT IS IT?

The basic concept of play by mail games is simply that you write down what you want your character(s) to do, usually by filling in a turn sheet, then post it to the GM (game moderator). After analysing your sheet the GM (human or computer) decides what happens. The results are then printed, and

posted back, restarting the whole process. Games based on this principal have been played almost since the beginning of the postal service. From chess through to various board games like *Diplomacy*, all manner of games have been converted to postal play. Soon, of course, people started designing their own games solely for playing by mail. Charging a small fee helped pay for the time and effort of these designers, and deterred time-wasters messing about with the games. As the years went on, more and more people thought that running a game would not only be fun, but could be financially rewarding. And so the play by mail company was born.

Nowadays if there is any sort of game you've ever fancied playing (whether postal or not)

similar PBM game. If you haven't found it yet then don't worry, keep reading these columns and I'm sure I'll mention a game that appeals. Alternatively you could send off for a magazine which is dedicated to PBM (most are only available via the postal service -God bless 'em - or at conventions). The best known of these is Flagship, which is an A4 prozine dedicated to play by mail games. It's fairly comprehensive, but often out of date by the time it arrives. It also carries a rather hefty price tag – £2 – but in the long run it's probably worth it. The latest issue is Number 18 and can be obtained form: Flagship, PO Box 12, Aldridge, WALSALL, West Midlands WS9 0TJ.

Alternatively you could try one of the two bigger fanzines dedicated to PBM. Firstly there's PBM Scroll which is now on Issue 6. It's 40, A5 pages long, a little scrappy in presentation, and overpriced at £1. Nevertheless it does give an 'alternative' view of the hobby and covers some amateur games that get little coverage elsewhere. Send your cheque to to John Woods, 91 Wandle Road, MORDEN, Surrey SM4 6AD.

The second fanzine is slightly harder hitting and covers a wider

range of topics. I'm not sure if I should be mentioning this at all, since I edit it! Judge for yourselves. It's called Start-Up (+ 2 Free Turns) and Issue 1 costs £1 (overpriced? Nah!) for 60, A5 pages. It contains PBM reviews, fiction and coverage of many other areas of gaming. Cheques to Start-Up, Orchard Cottage, Greenways, Flordon, NOR-WICH, Norfolk NR15 1QL.

Magazines and columns such as this aren't the only ways to get into the hobby. There are two associations which will deal with queries. The first is mainly responsible for organising conventions, but are generally a helpful bunch. They go by the name of **The British PBM** Association, and can be found at 2 David Court, 200 Lansdowne Road, London N17. The other group are called the Postal Gamers Association (PGA) and produce a newsletter/magazine which is very good (A5, 44pp, 75p). They can be contacted via the GM of Raiders Of Gwaras, Mike Richards at the address below.

### **CHEAP GAMES!**

I've tried to find some games for beginners which have start-up packages well under £5, and turns priced at under £1.50. Most of the games are Computer Moderated (CM) because PBM comparities find them easier to run, as well as making them cheaper for us.

Trolls Bottom: Free start-up with two turns. Turns £1 or £1.50. CM. You take on the persona of a Moon Troll in the wild and whacky land of the title. Good for beginners. KJC Games, PO Box 11, Cleveleys, BLACKPOOL, Lancs FY5 2UL.

Creephouse: Free start-up with two turns. Turns 80p. CM. You are a Creep in a crazy haunted house. Can you escape? A very different game, smoothly run with some hilarious turn replies. Project Basilisk, PO Box 24, Sheerness, Kent.

Crisis: Start-up £2. Turns £1 (Fast – seven day turnaround), £1.25 (Slow – ten days). CM. Based upon the boardgame RISK, but with nuclear missiles and numerous other innovations. A great introduction to PBMing and wargaming alike.

Mystery and Adventure
Games, 15 Fairview Crescent, Harrow, Middlesex HA2 9UB.

Skullball: £8.50 for ten games (turns) with the possibility of more if you make the finals. CM. A fun variation on soccer-management games making you head coach of a Skullball team. A game where the players use every part of their bodies to get the ball near their opponents' goal. On The Brink, Brink House, 18 Salvin Close, Cropwell Bishop, Nottingham

### NG12 3DZ.

Jetball: Start-up £3.50. Turns £1.50. CM. Similar in concept to Skullball, but your team is a group of hardened jetpacked thugs, attempting to become the champions of the galaxy at this violent, futuristic sport.

Alchemists Guild, PO Box 114, Kidlington, Oxford. OX5 1DS.

Raiders Of Gwaras: Start-up (plus one turn) £3. Turns £1.25. HM. One of the best Roleplaying PBMs to my mind. Unbelievably long turns, at a very low price. No other professional game at this quality can match Raiders on value for money. MJR Games, 4 Higher Lidden Road, Penzance TR18 4NZ.

### **CHRONICLES OF A PBMER**

Now to game much-mentioned in previous issues of CRASH. Our favourite novice, Mr Anon, returns to give us an idea of what The Chronicles Of The Knights Of Avalon is really like.

The start-up kit contains a newsletter, the basic rules and various starting sheets. The newsletter makes interesting reading and keeps you up-todate with happenings in Avalon, and other Jade games. The basic rulebook (advanced rulebooks cost £1, from turn five) is nicely presented, 'designed



only to give you an idea of the game's mechanics, the game expands for the player through gameplay, and is designed for you to discover'. I don't think this is a disadvantage, in fact it adds to the game, as you are forced to explore the game system. There are about sixty different combinations of orders, but the most commonly used are those concerning army movement, settlement building and expansion.

For some reason I missed the first game turn, and found that my settlements were randomly placed in my home province with my armies fixed in them. All pro-

vinces consist of a blank 10x10 grid with each small square representing an area of 5x5 miles. This province will be one of the 504 which appear in the game. While this may seem a lot, less than half of them are habitable due to sea, mountains, and the like. You have to discover the world around you, and your location within it.

The game print-out is very good, including reports from all generals and settlements.

Your main aim is to progress from Squire to Emperor. To achieve this you must increase your game rating and how to do this is only hinted at in the rulebook. In fact Avalon would prove very hard to win if you tried to go it alone, and alliances are very important. Try and expand, explore and use your initiative. On the down side the turnaround, which is supposedly 10 days, has varied from 10 to 15 days, leaving me very little time to get my orders back to Jade.

The Chronicles Of Avalon is one of the better introductions to the world of play by mail. Overall I'd give the game a good seven out of ten.

### **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

Thanks to Stuart Blake for some good questions which I've tried to comprehensively answer below.

Q Which is better, a computer or a human-moderated game? A Both have their own advantages. Computer moderation is often very clinical and perhaps a little impersonal. It is however (usually) fast, unbiased and (on the whole) error free. Human moderation may be slower but gives you that personal touch, as well as often being more interesting and less repetitive than some computer games. Having said that there are, of course, games of both sorts which break the rules.

Q Can a computer-moderated game be moderated by a 48K Spectrum, or do you need a 16bit machine?

A It very much depends on the game, and which pieces of the game you aim to run on the computer. If you have a game which is basically human-moderated, but also requires you to do some tedious calculations each turn, then a Spectrum would probably do fine. Almost every large, professional multi-player game is run on a 16-bit machine, though. I do know of a couple which aren't (see last month's column), but they are few and far between. If you aim to sell your game abroad then it is best to use the compiled Quickbasic language on an IBM-compatible PC Q How do you get a PO Box

number?

A Try your local Royal Mail Sorting Office (Main area post office). Q Does a rulebook have to be in the normal style of full-colour printing etc, or can it be just a lot of printed sheets?

A A rulebook can be in any format you like, photocopied, printed, whatever. To call full-colour printing the norm for a PBM game is perhaps a little misguided. Very few games have full colour rulebooks, or even fullcolour covers (two colour covers are few and far between). Most are plain and simple black and white printed booklets. Things don't have to be colour to look good, just get a pleasing layout, some good art, and your rulebook will be well up to the

games. Q Does the game have to be totally unlike all others or will I get strapped over copyright laws (ie

standards of many professional

Arcadia/Earthwood). A A difficult question. It's sad to say that a truly original game is now very hard to find. Most games are clever and neat variations of existing games. As long as you make sure that there are about as many differences as there are similarities no-one will worry. If your game is going to run with less than 100 players no-one is going to take much notice of you anyway. It's when things get professional and large sums of money are involved that tempers and legal threats start

to fly . . If any more of you have queries, please don't hesitate to write in

Finally I must just say something for all those people out there who are just starting a PBM game and want a mention in this column. Please don't just send photocopied adverts or whatever. To get my attention a full rule package and extra information is needed. Please bear this in mind when writing.

Next issue I'll be talking to those people who from Project Basilisk and being very nice to them, but only if they give me lots of free games and hints on how to win . . . Till then, keep 'em flooding . . .

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# GOGGLE

The ones you've been waiting for .



his month sees a clutch of high-velocity thrillers released, cumulatively spilling enough blood to keep a medium-sized hospital running for days. But the biggest and most hyped video is undoubtedly Steven **Spielberg**'s Disneyesque **E.T.** (CIC Video). Less a film, more of an event. Many who saw it the first time will rent it again to see if it really was as good as they remember. The arrival of the lovable alien on Earth and subsequent adventures with a suburban American family are certainly dazzlingly presented, with Oscar winning special effects, sound and score

A much more recent box office hit is the film which finally transformed Brian De Palma into a respectable household name -The Untouchables (CIC Video, 18). This 1987 update of the TV series of the same name concerns FBI agent Eliot Ness in a quest to arrest Chicago mobster Al Capone. Set during the American Prohibition (when all alcohol was banned in the 1930s) the movie is rated as one of the best gangster movies ever. Ness is played by Kevin Costner (No Way Out), while Capone is played the brilliant Robert De Niro (The Deer Hunter, Angel Heart etc). The Oscarwinning performance, however, is provided by Sean Connery as



film it should be unmissable on

An earlier, and due to its violence more controversial film, by Brian De Palma is Scarface (CIC Video, £9.99). A massive three-hour film starring **Al Pacino** as a Cuban drug dealer it drew a lot of flak from the critics - like most De Palma films - but I certainly found it watchable enough to rent at least.

Equally controversial is the 'part man, part machine, all cop RoboCop (Virgin, 18). Just as violent as the computer game, and even more gorey, this is set in the near-future where a dead cop, Murphy, has been rebuilt as the

not any of Murphy remains alive inside RoboCop's titanium armour is one of the key questions in this fast-moving film. Laced with a subtle, subversive black humour the screenplay drew inspiration from adult comics, something reflected in Rob Bottin's superb robot suit design. The man beneath the suit is Buckaroo Banzai star Peter Weller, whose exaggerated body movements add much to the realism. My personal favourite of the year's releases there's doubtlessly going to be some queues to rent this.

Another computer game inspiring title is Arnold Schwarzenegger's Predator



(CBS/Fox, 18). This has Arnie playing the leader of a group of honourable mercenaries hired on less than honest terms by the CIA for a rescue mission in Central America. While Arnie's human opponents always seem doomed from the start, the alien predator of the title is a lot tougher with a highly effective invisibility shield. Dialogue throughout the movie is terribly corny, but once the action begins you can forget that. The often gorey special effects are excellent, the cinematography first class and the action compelling. (Schwarzenegger's earlier hit movie - The Terminator (Virgin Vision, 18) is now available for £9.99.)

Oscar-winning cinematography of a distinctly different type contributes to effect of Bernardo Bertolucci's undoubted masterpiece, The Last Emperor (RCA/Columbia, 15). The winner of no less than nine Oscars, including Best Picture and Best Director. The story is effectively the biography of China's last emperor, Pu Yi, who rose to the throne at the age of three. Just three years after that over 3000 years of imperial rule were ended with the Communist revolution. Surprisingly the Emperor and his incredible palace, the Forbidden City, were left to carry on unchanged for over ten years while the Communists ran the rest of the country. Pu Yi's amazing story is here told with unprecedented access to the actual locations, making for an almost unparalleled visual treat. If you didn't see at the cinema give it a try now.

Another film which relies heavily on its visual appeal is **An American Tail** (CIC Video, U) — Steven Spielberg's first foray into producing animated movies. This was an unabashed attempt to recreate the high quality of early Disney films, when animators weren't quite so expensive. It certainly looks nice, and cute, but the story is a little weak. Nevertheless the adventures of a Russian mouse arriving in 19th Century America is bound to be a popular video success.

Also aimed squarely at the 'family entertainment' market is the Spielberg-produced **Batteries Not included** (CIC, PG) — surely an appropriate title for Christmas. This tells of a rundown neighbourhood under threat from cynical developers. To the rescue come some flying saucers, while on about the size of a plate their special powers of transformation might just save the day . . . Without question the real stars here are **ILM**'s (Industrial Light and Magic) top-notch, comic stop-motion



effects making the rather weak plot a less than fatal weakness.

By contrast the story of **Watership Down** (Guild Home Video) helps make it one of the best animated films around. Available at £9.99 this should make a pretty good Christmas present.

Almost equally cute, and much more funny is **John Water**'s **Hairspray** (RCA/Columbia, PG). Set in Sixties America the story follows plump teenager **Ricki Lane** in her efforts to win a TV danceshow trophy. The heart of this hilarious comedy is provided by recreations of Sixties dance crazes. Besides including the last appearance of the cult star **Divine**, Hairspray also features singer **Debbie Harry** in a supporting role.

Taking a more serious and more prominent role in *Light Of Day* is another American pop singer, **Joan Jett.** Together with *Back To The Future* star **Michael J Fox** she leads a struggling rock group in

Cleveland. The real problems, though, revolve around the pair's strife-torn family. An interesting movie, with a great performance from Jett, this is well worth checking out.

Another rock star, **George Harrison**, is the co-producer of yet another back-to-the-Sixties film, **Withnail & I**. Set in 1969 this features two 'resting' actors on a permanent drug-and-alcohol binge in London. Sporadically very funny indeed this had a mixed critical reception at the box office, but should do well on video.

Appealing once more to the sell-through market is Warner's latest pair of £9.99-per-video collections. Firstly there's **The Classic War Collection**. This includes **The Wooden Horse**—an exciting POW drama, **The Cruel Sea**—documentary style WWII warship drama, **The Dam Busters**—classic bombing raid film, **The Colditz Story**—famous POW tale,

Ice Cold In Alex – tense WWII drama set in Libya, The Battle Of Britain – star-studded blockbuster where flying sequence outshine acting, 633 Squadron – somewhat pretentious 1944 bombing raid film, The Great Escape – even better than classic computer game, and A Bridge Too Far – stars by the dozen in a very average spectacular.

The second Warner special carries the ambitious title The **Best Of British Directors** Collection. These largely 1980s titles include John Boorman's Excalibur - excellent King Arthur epic, Alan Bridge's The **Shooting Party** – superior story of class conflict in 1913 England, Peter Duffell's The Far **Pavilions** – intrigues in Imperial India, Bill Forsyth's Local Hero-**Burt Lancaster** in touching Scottish comedy, Hugh Hudson's Revolution - epic flop about American Revolution and more successful Greystoke: The Legend Of Tarzan, Lord Of The Apes – stylish but a little too long, Nicholas Roeg's Don't Look **Now** - mystic happenings in Venice and Roland Joffe's The **Killing Fields** – the tragedy of Cambodia, and more recent **The Mission** – beautiful 18th Century story of Spain's occupation of Brazil. While the 'best of British' claim is obviously a little silly considering the omissions, not to mention the inclusion of Revolution, this is certainly a first class collection.



Finally we have the appropriately-timed video release of the latest film version of Christmas's most famous novel; Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol. Starring George C Scott, Suzannah York, Nigel Davenport and numerous other stars this is an above average film, beautifully filmed (in Shrewsbury, just 29 miles north of CRASH Towers) and well-acted. Don't be a Scrooge rent this, or one of the other fine releases above for some excellent entertainment this Christmas. See you soon . . .

# **RUDOLPH'S** RED-NOSED LONDON, Greater London 24 November to 29 January

# GUIDE

CRASH tells you where it's the **Christmas** month... Take your red nose with you!

BRISTOL, Avon

17 December (Provisional date) **Christmas Illuminated Carnival** Historic Harbour, Bristol City Docks. Boats on the waterfront with festive illuminations plus seasonal entertain-

For further information tel: (0272) 266031

### WINCHESTER, Hampshire

3,4,10,11,17-20 December

Marwell's Famous Christmas Winter Wonderland

Marwell Zoological Park, Colden Com-

Tel: (0962) 74406.

Festive entertainment complete with a Christmas grotto and live reindeer! Open daily 10:00am to 5:00pm. Admission £3.75 (includes zoo admission, presents and refreshments).

Wildlife Photographer of the Year Natural History Museum, Cromwell

Tel: (01) 938 9123.

A display of the winning entries in the international natural history photography competition.

Open Monday to Saturday 10:00am to 6:00pm. Sunday 1:00pm to 6:00pm. Admission: adults £2.00, children

Monday to Friday 4:30pm to 6:00pm all

9 December to 12 March Lawrence of Arabia

National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place WC2.

Tel: (01) 930 1552.

Marking the centenary of his birth, the exhibition depicts the life of one of the most enigmatic and renowned military leaders in 20th century British history. Open Monday to Friday 10:00am to 5:00pm, Saturday 10:00am to 6:00pm, Sunday 2:00pm to 6:00pm.

Admission: adults £2.50, children

7 November to 6 January **Regent Street Christmas Lights** Regent Street W1. The lights will be switched on by a

celebrity guest on 7 November at

6:00pm. They will be on daily from 3:30pm to 12:00pm.

8 December to 6 January Norwegian Christmas Tree Lights

Trafalgar Square WC2. The City of Oslo has presented a Norwegian spruce tree to Britain every year since 1947. The white lights will be switched on at 18:00 on 8 December and each evening until 24 December carols will be sung around the tree.

1 January

Lord Mayor of Westminster's Big **Parade** 

Through the streets of Central London. Parade of marching bands from Britain, America and Europe, plus decorated floats.

Starts 1:00pm.

### EDINBURGH, Lothian

6-31 December

'The Snow Queen'

Royal Lyceum Theatre, Grindlay Street. Box Office: tel (031) 229 9697. Famous Han Christian Anderson story

Mel Croucher claims Star Wars ripped off (we don't believe him, though!). Traditional family show.

### MALTON, North Yorkshire

16 to 24 December

Malton and Norton Dickensian Christmas Festival

Throughout the town. Step back in time to when Dickens was a lad. Victorian entertainment and street markets. Tel: (0653) 692608.

With many thanks to the British Tourist Association.

# The 1988 **British** Video **Awards**

After Et Al trying to pick the best of each month's video releases we thought it'd be good to report on what the 1988 Video Awards thought . . .

early 66% of homes in the UK have either a rented or bought video cassette recorder, and in 1988 £250 million will be spent on blank and £9.99 or less videos. The UK's biggest selling video tape, Watch With Mother, has sold over quarter of a million copies. That's a pretty healthy market and finally, it seems, the entertainment industry has woken up to that fact. The Daily Mirror/British Videogram Association Awards, held on October 20, were admittedly no Oscar extravaganza, but the Grosvenor House venue was plush and there were stars aplenty to both applaud and make acceptance speeches.

Winners were selected via the votes of Daily Mirror readers and were confined to the big, Best Actor-type awards rather than extending to the depth which makes the Oscars ceremony last so long. Watch With Mother may have hit the top-seller's list, but the top five Children's Videos from the voters went as fol-

1 Masters Of The Universe – Dolph Lundgren as the muscular TV and toy charac-

2 Big Foot And The Hendersons – John Lithgow stars as the head of a household that befriends a 7-foot high sasquatch;

3 Flight Of The Navigator – 12-year-old in

Disney space adventure;

4 Labyrinth – Monty Python's Terry Jones provides mystical script for Muppets;

5 Thomas The Tank Engine And Friends Percy And Harold – addictive action from the successful threesome.

Masters Of The Universe flopped at the box office, helping along the demise of Cannon pictures, but now seems to have found its perfect niche on home video. The original cartoon-of-the-toys has, of course, spawned two Spectrum games (Masters Of The Universe by US Gold – 28%, Issue 38 – and the identically

titled adventure from Adventuresoft - 84%, Issue 44). The film itself has produced yet another one, called, yes, you guessed it — Masters Of The Universe. This Gremlin release earned 70% in Issue 49. Star Dolph Lundgren is currently working on The Punisher, based on an American comic, and is contemplating writing his own screenplays.

Doubtlessly ready to make a few quips about that are some of the comic stars heading the new Special Interest category. The top vid-

eos here were:

1 Billy Connolly: Live At The Albert Hall outrageous comedy from the unique Scotsman;

2 Laurel And Hardy: Way Out West - more comedy in glorious black and white;

3 Comic Strip Presents: Mr Jolly Lives Next Door - classic alternative humour;

4 101 Great Goals - Phil's favourite;

Watch With Mother - Mark's favourite. As far is known no computer game has yet to feature the Big Yin, although Jeff Minter may be working on one, and you must be over 18 to see the hilarious X-rated Albert Hall performance.

Open to more universal appeal are the top five Family videos, which were as follows:

1 Big Foot And The Hendersons - it'll bring a tear to your eye;

2 The Golden Child – Murphy's is the Chosen One;



3 Flight Of The Navigator - family fun for all; 4 Short Circuit - Guttenburg and Sheedy in romantic robotic adventures;

5 Superman IV – Milton Keynes becomes Metropolis

Incidentally, Big Foot, under that superb costume, was 7' 2" Kevin Peter Hall who played a decidedly nastier critter in the recently released Predator video.

The top five British videos covered a surprising variety of topics and were:

1 The Living Daylights – Dalton's currently working on the next Bond, Licence Revoked; 2 Wish You Were Here - Emily Lloyd hits the

big time in this hilarious Fifties comedy; 3 The Mission – superb cinematography from award-winning Chris Menges;

4 Personal Services - ask your Mum;

5 Where The Wind Blows – shocking WWIII tale in cartoon form

The Living Daylights was the second Bond film to be made into a computer game and got 63% in Issue 43, while the third computer



game - Roger Moore's debut Live And Let Die is reviewed in this issue on page 186.

The Best Video Actresses include one former Bond girl and come out like this:

Julie Walters - Personal Services; Whoopi Goldberg - The Color Purple, Jumpin' Jack Flash;

3 Kim Basinger – No Mercy, Blind Date;

4 Meryl Streep - Out Of Africa;



5 Kathleen Turner - Peggy Sue Got Married, Crimes Of Passion, Prizzi's Honour.

Winner Walters rose to fame in BBC TV's Victoria Wood As Seen On TV and later made her breakthrough in movies with a British Oscar for her starring role in Educating Rita. Her latest box office hit has her co-starring with Phil Collins in Buster, the story of one of the Great Train robbers. Another rock star, Roger Daltrey, will be appearing with her in The Threepenny Opera, currently being shot in

There's no British names in the Best Video Actors, however. These are:

1 Eddie Murphy – Raw, Beverly Hills Cop II, The Golden Child;

2 Patrick Swayze – Dirty Dancing;
3 Paul Hogan – Crocodile Dundee;

4 Mel Gibson – Lethal Weapon;



5 Steve Martin - Roxanne, The Three

After shooting to superstandom in Beverly Hills Cop, Murphy has made a string of critically-panned films including Beverly Hills Cop II, The Golden Child and Coming To America. An 18-rated live performance film, Raw, has also been released to a mixed critical response. Nevertheless Murphy has become, perhaps uniquely, a guaranteed box office draw. Where even Sylvester Stallone has had flops Murphy's wise-cracking comic persona has yet to fail in drawing in the crowds. Due to the critical response to his films Murphy's yet to be in with a chance at an Oscar, so perhaps that was why he decided to personally collect this award.

The Best Videos of 1988 naturally feature this great comic and are came out as follows:

1 **Dirty Dancing** – Swayze and Jennifer Grey dance the night away to the chart-topping soundtrack:

2 Crocodile Dundee - Hogan's own brand of Aussie humour;

3 Top Gun—Tom Cruise reaching for the stars (but only coming third);

4 Lethal Weapon – fast-paced cop action from Danny Glover and Gibson;

5 Beverly Hills Cop II – from the duo that brought you Top Gun.

The year's Best Video features Patrick Swayze as a 1950's dance instructor teaching Jennifer Grey how it's done. Despite costing only £3.5 million the film has been a huge success making almost £90 million worldwide. The first soundtrack album has spent 48 weeks in the American charts, with the second making the Top Ten as well. A *Dirty Dancing* concert has just finished a very successful tour of America and Europe, with a video of the US tour about to be released. Naturally a sequel to the movie is being considered, while a Dirty Dancing TV show is already showing on American screens. As for the computer

Next year's winners seem destined to cover an even broader spectrum of films, with probably yet more computer licences in there.

RoboCop, The Untouchables Rambo III are likely to be strong contenders for top video so Ocean must be looking forward to it.







### And Rex is so strong!

Producer Martech Greenpeace card £8.99 cass £14.99 disk Author The Light

fter Mrs Thatcher's conversion to environmental protection who next you may well ask? How about a hybrid alien that looks like a rhinoceros and carries more guns than Rambo? It's true I tell you, and when Rex hears about a huge Tower belching out pollution on Zenith he has to act. To get into the Tower (load

Through to Level Two with the one-man-army, Rex

After just a few plays Rex had me totally hooked. The main character is superbly animated and while the graphics are all small, they're also very colourful and well drawn. In fact the only problem with Rex is having to retrace your steps through several screens after every death. Apart from this, Rex is fabulous with loads of utterly amazing weapons and great playability.

two) Rex must enter a tunnel heavily populated with enemy soldiers, missiles and gun turrets. Fortunately Rex is armed with a gun, some smart bombs and a shield. The shield has limited energy which can be recharged by standing on special energy platforms. Other platforms, beam pads, rematerialize Rex when he dies, but are often several screens from where Rex was killed. Also to be found are weapons pods

which can give double-firing guns, a laser and multidirectional firing. These all consume weapon energy, so it's as well that enemies you've shot, deposit weapons energy

bubbles.

Arrows help guide Rex through the tunnel but there's no one way to reach the Tower. If Rex manages to reach the end of the underground complex, he gains access to the second stage where he must set off explosive charges in the Tower, then escape. A code is given at the end of the first stage to preserve your game statistics for the second load.

This is a great mix of arcade/ adventure and shoot-'em-up play. The only real problem is its

toughness, simply jumping around the cavern's platforms and pads is difficult, while even when Rex is fully armed his enemies are formidable opponents. There's no denying the skill of the programmers, and if you fancy a substantial challenge check it out.

PHIL

84%

### AND REX IS HARD

- Apart from protection, your shield can also be used to kill enemies.
- Watch the weapon power status. The higher this is, the more devastating an effect the current weapon will have.
- An extra bonus is awarded for rapid hits on soldiers.
- o if it seems like you're trapped, remember some of the walls can be destroyed. Warning: this a great looking and highly playable blastem-up which is very addictive. It's also pretty darn hard, with lots of pretty sprites dashing on screen to snipe at you unless you get them first. Considering how addictive it is the beam pad problem's all the more irritating, but with the Christmas Hols coming up maybe you need a tough challenge. MARK 85%

### THE ESSENTIALS

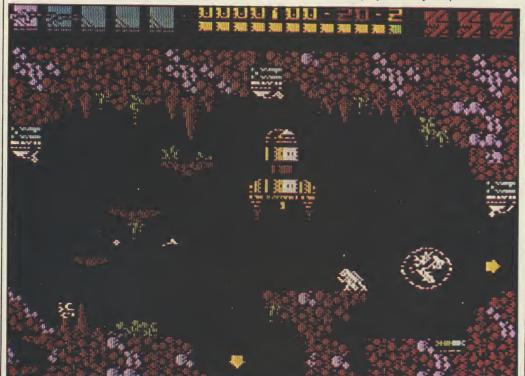
Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston. Sinclair

Graphics: intricately-animated, small sprites run and leap around colourful backdrops Sound: no tunes but there are plenty of decent spot effects for firing and explosions etc Options: play part one or two (which needs a pass code from the first level for Rex's vital statistics)

General rating: great, challenging action which is also well presented

Presentation	80%
Graphics	82%
Sound	70%
Playability	81%
Addictive qualities	80%

**OVERALL 82%** 



▲ Small, highly-detailed graphics with great use of colour



# Producer US Gold

ne of the year's biggest arcade games has finally arrived on the Spectrum and thanks to some state-of-theart programming it looks pretty darn good. The game takes place in a country where the government has been overthrown by rebels who plan to install an evil dictator. Fortunately the finest helicopter pilot alive, you, are still at liberty with the world's most powerful fighting machine all fuelled up and ready to go. Codenamed the Gunship Gladiator you hesitate hardly a second before climbing aboard and setting off to restore

Democracy . . .
The Thunder Blade is armed with machine guns and air-toground missiles, but has no defences other than a bit of armour plating and your skill at dodging bullets. These skills have to see you through

PHIL At last it's here! And I can finally see what all the fuss was about. The innovative graphics techniques used for the innovative graphics techniques used for the changing perspective are really impressive—I especially like the cityscape overhead view sections where a definite sense of vertigo is induced as you dive towards the ground. But Thunder Blade isn't just impressive technically. In the playability stakes, it's tremendously addictive, even though it's limited mainly to simple blasting. Unfortunately there are the usual problems with the multiload which rudely interrupts play every so often. But despite this minor irritation, as a mixture of essentially two different shoot-'em-up styles, Thunder Blade represents very good value for money. It's not just another dull shoot-'em-up, but a technically impressive conversion from the brilliant coin-op and has inherited the great playability and high-flying atmosphere of the original arcade machine. What a great Tiertex treat, just in time for Christmas! Rotor-wing arcade action takes Spectrum by storm!

£12.99 disk Author Tiertex Down in the canyons with the tanks on Level Two

four levels of mechanised mayhem. Each level - except the final one - is split into three sections; two overhead, vertically scrolling sections and one flying into the screen section. Overall there are 12 sections grouped into several multiloads (four on the 128K, eight on the 48K).

On Level One the Thunder Blade is flying through a city heavily populated with tanks, helicopters and jet aircraft.
Dropping in height on the
overhead section makes the skyscrapers and roads grow larger in an impressive display of 3-D programming. The joystick controls left/right

direction and height, speed is either by keys or joystick – hold down fire and forward.

Kerosene £8.99 cass

Once you have battled your way through the city you must face a large battleship kicking out flak and Missiles in all directions. When this is sunk an end of level bonus is awarded, depending on the amount of hits scored. The



second level moves the player to another potential paintwork-scraping encounter – rotoring through a network of caverns toward another ominous enemy. Level Three finds our intrepid hero flying over enemy held jungles and waterways, now coming under fire from heavily armed ships. The final baddie here is a huge aircraft.

disk

By the fourth and final level the ravages of battle are starting to show on your battered and dented chopper, as well as your battered and bruised body, but tough mercenaries like you don't give up, after all you don't think Arnie Schwarzenegger would say 'naff this for a game of soldiers, I'm off home' (in his Austrian accent). No, he'd fight on, in search of the ultimate goal – an oil refinery which should make a satisfying bang before you take on the last battleship.

I think US Gold have done a

I think US Gold have done a great job here, converting such a great coin-op to the Spectrum. The 3-D perspectives are used to great effect, especially on the first

SPEED HIT OF THE SPEED

level with the tall buildings soaring to their lofty heights, and you vainly tugging at the joystick trying to avoid them. Although the sprites are monochromatic, they are all well designed, and serve their functions with a singleminded determination – for the most part this means blowing the socks off of the brave chopper pilot. I greatly enjoy playing the arcade version, and although the hydraulic chair isn't present

game is just as much fun. I think that US Gold are onto a big Christmas hit with Thunder Blade.

MARK 90%

 On the first section, keep weaving left and right, while firing like mad.

 On vertically-scrolling sections, use missiles to destroy the ground installations.

• Try to eliminate as many installations on the verticallyscrolling levels to earn a bigger bonus.

 On the 3-D overhead-view sections, keep high to fly over the buildings.

The only thing missing from *Thunder Blade* is the rudder and moving cockpit, everything else is here. The graphics are faithful to the arcade machine and full of detail, the 3-D perspective with trees, blocks of flats and tanks zooming past is excellent. These graphics give a feeling of realism that most shoot-'em-ups lack and even though there is a absence of colour, the targets are never cluttered by badly detailed back-

grounds. There is a pretty drastic multiload system, so if you don't have a tape counter then you could be in serious trouble! Thunder Blade is yet another excellent arcade conversion – a must for the arcade machine lovers and helicopter simulation freaks alike.

on the computer version, the

NICK 92%

### THE ESSENTIALS

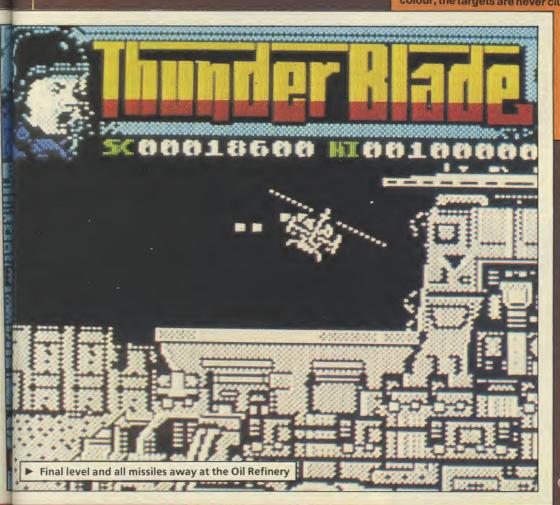
Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair Graphics: amazing 3-D perspective which changes as you climb and dive, giving a true sense of height Sound: Good music on 128 with

Sound: Good music on 128 with lots of effective explosions on both 48 & 128 machines

General rating: a superb conversion of the great coin-op—US Gold and Tiertex have definitely pulled off what others said couldn't be done

Presentation	91%
Graphics	93%
Sound	79%
Playability	92%
Addictive qualities	90%

OVERALL 91%
Christmas Special 1988 185







Producer Domark/Elite
Passport to death £8.99 cass
£14.99 disk
Author Byron Nilsson,
graphics by Pete Tattersall, music by Mark
Cookson

fter two distinctly substandard Bond games (A View To A Kill – 76%, Issue 18 – and The Living Daylights – 63%, Issue 43) Domark has turned to Elite for this one. Apparently Elite were working on a speedboat game—the film features a massive speedboat chase – and in an unprecedented link-up Domark arranged for the Aquablast program to be converted for their licence.

The 1973 film's plot concerns a voodoo island where the evil Dr Kanaga is producing heroin and shipping it to the USA. Since the Dr's drug-processing factories need a large water supply they've been built on a waterway. The game begins with Bond trying to infiltrate them by piloting his Q-customised speedboat down the river. Opposing him are enemy boats, mines and floating logs. To prepare for a variety of these seaborne missions vou can also select a training option - set in the Sahara desert!

Bond's speedboat consumes a lot of fuel, and if it runs out the game's over. Luckily, friendly

### **LIVE AND NOT DIE**

- Try some of the training missions before taking on the mission proper.
- Don't fire continuously or you'll destroy the fuel canisters.
  Save your missiles for the large gates which obstruct your path.
- Weave left and right to avoid the bombs from the launchers at the side of the waterway.

Surprisingly, Live And Let Die is a really addictive speedboat chase game and has some lastability if you are prepared to persist with it. Presentation is good, with colour used well throughout the game. Actual graphics are very similar to Elite's Buggy Boy, and in fact some of the levels resemble stages of the arcade game left out of the Spectrum conversion. It's fun to play—until you get irritated by the toughness.

NICK 68%



helicopters pass overhead from time to time, dropping barrels of fuel which replenish your tanks. Hazards can either be shot with machine guns, missiles (essential for some objects), avoided or jumped over by ramming into a log, *Buggy Boy*style. Indeed, *Live And Let Die* 

resembles a cross between Roadblasters and Buggy Boy, but with the novelty of being set on water. Unfortunately it's just that bit too slow to be genuinely eyebrow-raising. The best 007 game so far, though, and fairly addictive.

PHIL 75%

### THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair Graphics: effective, although fairly slow 3-D scrolling waterway

Sound: irritating tune on the front end, plus a few aquatic effects during play
Options: definable keys.
Choose between different loca-

**General rating:** probably the most playable Bond game yet, but not really outstanding

Presentation	79%
Graphics	72%
Sound	32%
Playability	70%
Addictive qualities	69%

OVERALL 71%

Producer Imagine
Out of pocket £7.95 cass
£14.95 disk
Author Steve Lamb (code and graphics), graphics by
Alison Jeftha, music by
Jonathon Dunn

## Something to put the wind up you?

ear me, I'm afraid these
Japanese scenarios are as
innovative as their cars. In
brief; it's the future, the
mechanoid aliens are trying to
invade, you've volunteered to
fight them off, first in a F-14, then
a helicopter. There are six levels
of this and you start the game
with a standard machine gun, a
limited supply of bombs (useful
for dropping on unsuspecting
mechanoids bonces) and a
smart bomb, one per life.

Naturally, after destroy a fairly large quantity of aliens a token is deposited by the alien wreckage which should enable you to kill even more of them. (About as smart as those 'smart' bombs which blow themselves up. I'd say.) These tokens provide more powerful weapons such as more bombs, lasers and missiles. By skilful use of these megaweapons you can fight through to the end of the level where the humongous enemy they should have thrown at you in the first place lurks. These are pretty tough dudes and will take every bit of available firepower to defeat them (it's too late to wish

## Who said golf was a crazy game?

Producer Accolade/Electronic
Arts
Par for course £8.95 cass
£14.95 disk
Author Chris Fayers

ove over Nick Faldo and Co, this is a program which shows how the game should *really* be played . . .

Having paid for putter and ball you, and up to three friends, choose which of four courses to make fools of yourselves on – Deluxe, Classic, Traditional or Challenge – then input a suitably silly names, like lan Woosnam. Each of the courses have nine holes and – if you're a real boring fuddy-duddy – you can practise any of them before playing a course in full.

Once in play the main part of the screen shows a bird's eye view of whichever part of the putting green you're mucking about on. Below that there's a control panel with a map of the complete hole, power and direction bars, score card and a rather daft (or flattering, depending on who you are) picture of you. Once you've placed the cursor where you'd like the ball to go, then set the



# stake. So with the battle of the

### **HURRICANE HINTS**

- Learn and anticipate attack waves.
- Destroy anti-aircraft turrets as soon as possible.
- Save the smart bombs as you will definitely need them for the later stages.

• The smart bombs also destroy the enemies bullets so they can come in very handy.

Another conversion hot from the arcade machine, this time it's the action packed air/sea combat game, Typhoon. And this is one conversion that has retained its addictiveness and playability on the Spectrum. There are excellent sound effects and a great tune to begin each game. The stages get

harder as you fight your way through each wave of dogfights, until it is almost impossible to stay alive for more than a few seconds! From F-14 to chopper, it's non stop arcade action all the way. Ignore James Brown and the sheep farmer - try this great coin-op conversion!

**NICK 83%** 

you had picked up that extra missile token that whizzed past you on the previous screen). But you're such a courageous person that you attack nevertheless, because the freedom of your planet is at

last level still ringing in your ears, you attack and hope that you survive

Graphically Typhoon is similar to Capcom's 1943, the same style of monochromatic sprites have been used, and to my mind look just as bland, albeit more detailed. Enemies swarm around the player's aircraft

THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair Graphics: simple sprites on messy and confusing backdrops

causing as much trouble as possible, and generally their defences are hard to crack. Playability isn't terrible, but the combination of poor presentation and totally unoriginal format gave me little incentive to play on. A mediocre game which should never have been converted.

MARK 55%

Sound: great 128K title tune, but nothing too special during play General rating: a competent, but unexceptional shoot-'em-up in the same mould as GO!/Capcom's 1943. For mindless violence freaks only (that's why Nick loved it so much)

Presentation	70%
Graphics	66%
Sound	62%
Playability	67%
Addictive qualities	63%

**OVERALL 67%** 





### ONE OVER THE LIMIT?

Mark.

Practise each hole before playing a full round.

Try to 'read' the slopes to judge where the ball will go.

• When putting through a moving object, keep the fire button pressed after selecting the accuracy, the ball will only start moving when you let go.

• Try to use the slopes to help the ball into the hole. I remember playing this sort of thing at the seaside when I was knee-high to a sheep, so I really enjoyed Mini-Putt. One problem is how important luck can be - sometimes you just whack the ball and it goes straight into the hole. Still that's part of the real game. Recommended even for non-golfers and sane people like

PHIL 71%



suitable power and direction (left/right) bars by two presses on the fire button.

On first playing I was disappointed there were no windmills or such like, just patches of arrows which alter the direction of the ball. However upon selecting the Classic course I was pleased to discover hazards such as a space shuttle, elephant, jet and even the Taj

NICK This is one to keep you crazy for ages. The way the ball moves, and the different power settings, all work fine and the Classic course in particular is great fun. In short a refreshing change from the Leader Board-type golf games which should keep you, and some friends, alternately giggling and cursing that darn elephant's trunk.

Graphic presentation of the course is just adequate, except for the Classic's obstacles which are quite nicely drawn. With no need to pick a club. watch the wind speed and so on Mini-Putt is really easy to get into -but hard to master. A good, fun game for armchair sportsmen everywhere.

**MARK 80%** 

### THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair

Graphics: a mixture of simple arrows and well-drawn large obstacles

Sound: not much, but it isn't important

Options: up to four players can take part on any of four courses. Practise any hole option

General rating: not in the same class as Leader Board, but an amusingly goofy golf game

71%
61%
21%
77%
71%

**OVERALL 73%** 



# Peter Basidslau's

### Grandslam score an own goal!

Producer Grandslam Cup tickets £8.95 cass **AuthorTeque** 

way man, Peter Beardsley in his own computer game? Yes, the toothless, £1.9 million pound superstar of Liverpool is starring in his own

a jerkily-scrolling pitch dribbling the ball with perfect control. In fact you can easily dribble the ball all the way up the pitch into the opponents' goal. Even the two player option and the 'Ere we go' tunes don't do much to improve such a tacky attempt at computer football. Long live Match Day II!

PHIL 24%



MARK 22 matchstick figures hobbling feebly around a vast expanse of jerkily-scrolling pitch seem intended as a sarcastic comment on England's recent performance. Certainly they didn't inspire any great terrace chants in the CRASH office. The players themselves didn't seem that impressed, either turning their backs, or wandering off in the opposite direction to the ball. The sound seems to be the best part of this game, with a nice tune warbling away to itself in both 48K and 128K modes. But if even football-mad Phil doesn't like this, I don't reckon it has much chance.

20%

soccer game.

This soccer simulation has Peter playing in his international role for that brilliant (at losing) team, England, in the European Championships (bit late isn't it?). Don't worry, though, if you want to win you can play for countries like Albania and Holland. Just like the real Championships, there are two groups of four teams, with the first two in each going through to the semi-finals.

Once all the pre-match selections have been made, including the length of the match, it's time for the kick-off. The inlay states that the teams appear in their authentic colours, but I can't remember having seen England ever play in all yellow!

Once the whistle goes you're faced with badly-defined, flickery sprites staggering down

### THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair

Graphics: ill-defined sprites on a jerkily-scrolling pitch Sound: good medley of football anthems

Options: one or two players. Change teams in each group General rating: it plays almost as badly as England!

Presentation	26%
Graphics	22%
Sound	61%
Playability	24%
Addictive qualities	20%

**OVERALL 22%** 

### Ninja muggers in Central Park!

Producer System 3 Shurikens £12.99 cass £14.99 disk Author Mev Dinc, graphics by **Gary Thornton, music** by Brian Marshall

ong ago, in 12th Century Japan, mystical warriors called Ninja were almost wiped out during a purge by the evil Shogun, Kunitoki. A single ninja master, Armakuni, survived to continue the teaching however. Yet,

with beautifully detailed drums and music stands lying around the place. Armakuni starts out without any weapons whatsoever to help him. Yet even in this weird, new environment, he is safe in the knowledge that his ninja skills will see him through. Indeed, Central Park soon turns out to be littered with martial arts weapons such as shuriken stars, a staff and a sword.

Combat is controlled in the usual beat-'em-up style with combinations of directions and fire accessing a variety of moves. When unarmed,



strangely, during one of his subsequent training sessions a pulsating light enveloped him and magically transported to him to a strange new place. And so he must resume his battle with his ancient enemy, Kunitoki, in present-day New York, amid the strange surroundings of 'gigantic shapes covered with mirrors' (skyscrapers).

And so the adventure begins in the odd setting of a bandstand in Central Park,

Armakuni can only kick or punch his opponent, but holding a weapon allows him to stab and slash them.

Apart from simple fighting, Armakuni must solve logical puzzles to progress further through six multiloaded levels (even on the 128K) at the end of which he will finally get to meet his arch-enemy, face to

20,000 special limited editions (worldwide) of Last Ninja 2 come in a huge (A5-ish)



box, complete with a soft plastic shuriken throwing star (even that proved almost lethal to the office cat! - get well soon, Tiddles) and a black ninja mask (which Lloyd has

taken to wearing instead of his usual paper bag).

All this flashy packaging doesn't automatically mean that the game is great but thankfully Last Ninja 2 lives up

### **NINJA KNOW-HOW**

 Grab a weapon as soon as possible, you can't defeat every enemy with your feet and fists alone.

• When an enemy starts throwing shurikens, walk in the opposite direction to him. So if he walks left you walk right, this way the shuriken will always miss you.

• If the fighting is getting too furious in one screen then just walk out and rest, when you feel up to it go back in again.

• Use the key to get through the gate to the river.

Don't fall in the water or you'll drown!

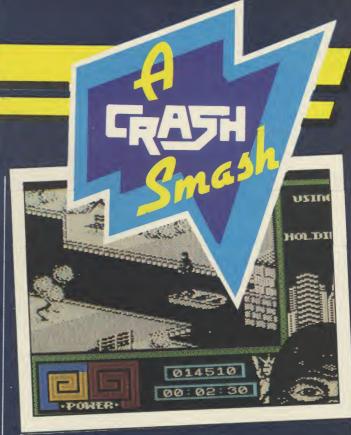
won't see you liking the controls.

Use the claws to climb up the grating to get the staff.
Keep alternating between kicking and punching to outwit

Last Ninja 2: the long awaited sequel to a game which unfortunately never appeared on the Spectrum. Has the wait been worth it? The first thing that strikes you is the difficulty of the control methods available. You have a choice of three different modes but they are all impossible to master and your ninja ends up looking like a drunk. The programmer has obviously spent the majority of his time developing the graphics. They are excellent, but what is the point having great graphics and difficult, monotonous gameplay? Every few seconds you are killing someone, which involves pressing the same key over and over until your enemy dies (probably from boredom). But despite the terrible controls there are some challenging puzzles to be worked out making the game worth persevering with. Last Ninja 2 is worth buying for the

excellent 3-D graphics, but if you have a short patience I

**NICK 87%** 

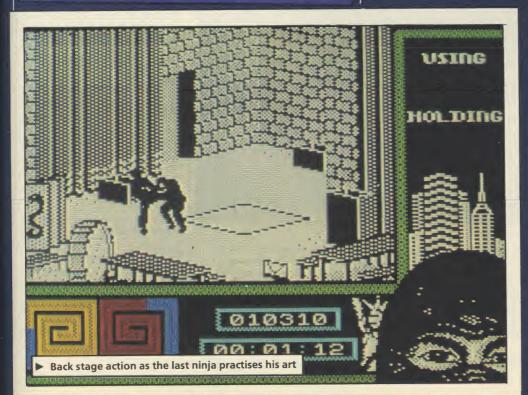


to the hype. It contains some of the most beautiful isometric graphics ever seen on a Spectrum. This creates a wonderful environment in which the puzzling action can take place. And puzzling it certainly is; especially at first, when even getting off the first screen is a problem.

But perseverance reveals a truly awe-inspiring game with great attention to detail in both graphics and gameplay. My only niggle is that the control system is rather awkward (especially if you haven't got a joystick), but even this fails to spoil this oriental masterpiece.

PHIL 91%

MARK This is a superb game. The graphics simply dazzle lespecially like the way he draws his weapon. All this obviously makes the fiddly controls all the more frustrating until they're mastered. Once they are the highest priority is finding weapons because facing a shuriken star-wielding baddle with bare hands is no fun. The puzzles all have logical answers and half the fun is racking your brains trying to solve them. Last Ninja 2 is a great game which deserves to do well.



### THE ESSENTIALS

Joysticks: Sinclair Graphics: an intricatelydetailed isometric landscape with well-animated ninja sprites Sound: an ear-wrenching oriental title tune plus a few ingame effects

Options: choose between three joystick/movement modes General rating: not just a beautiful graphics demonstration but an excellent, playable arcade adventure/beat-'em-up

Presentation	92%
Graphics	93%
Sound	61%
Playability	85%
Addictive qualities	90%

**OVERALL** 90% Christmas Special 1988 189



### Ludlow on a Wednesday night?

Producer Firebird Axed price £8.99 cass Author Probe Software

our true love has been kidnapped by demons, so straightening your Proclaimers-type glasses and fastening your loin cloth you set off for the local disco to chat someone else up. Unfortunately it's Ludlow, it's a Wednesday, so it's closed. Faced with the prospect of another castle tour you decide to see where the old girl's got to.

Level One sees you strolling through a rather a bigger castle than Ludlow's, populated not by Nick-type college students but huge monsters. At first all you've got to fight with is an axe, but after destroying several monsters, glowing blocks are deposited which give extra

with skulls. Zooming along at top speed, trying to shoot these while avoiding stationary monsters is no easy task. But guess what? Your girlfriend never left the castle after all! So halfway through Death Valley you have to turn and go back.

Arrive at the castle and you're pretty knac . . . tired. And there's no way you're leaping about the castle again, but an old friend is only a phone call away and he's dafter than you, being an eagle. You tell him to find your beloved and let her know if she doesn't leave now you're never going to the movies with her again. In the final load, you control the eagle in his search of the lowest levels of the dungeon. But those demons that you savaged (well, you're called Savage after all) on your entrance are still around. Things are not going to be easy . .



▲ Skulls racing towards you in Level Two's Death Valley

The first thing you notice about Savage is the large and spectacular graphics with minimal colour clash. All three sections look very good indeed and while playability's not bad either, especially on the second section. Yet while technically first class I found the unoriginality disappointing. With so much potential the gameplay is strangely weak. Very similar to Trantor - nice graphics, shame about the game.

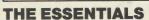
MARK 71%

### SAVAGE SAVERS

- Don't fly too close to the water on Level Three - it's lethal.
- Level Two has targets that move up and down, mirror movements they're easier to hit.
- Never stop firing on any level, unless you want to be buried under a swarm of enemies.
- Keep quickly weaving left and right on the second level to avoid the nasties. Three games in one with a

linking storyline and decent presentation. In fact, I'd go as far to say this is a pleasure to the old eyes, with excellently defined graphics, smooth animation and lots of colour with minimal clash. While none of the games are particularly original they're all fun to play and mildly addictive.

**NICK 84%** 

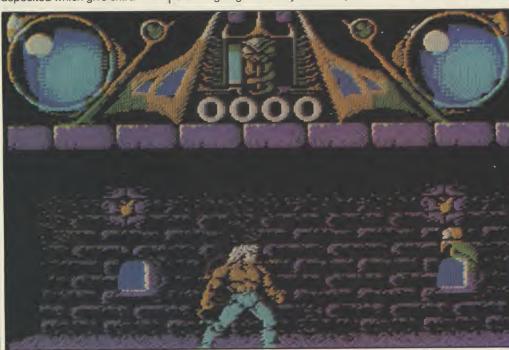


Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston,

Graphics: massive sprites and mildly impressive 3-D perspective on Level Two

Sound: buzzy, but effective, 48K title tunes with crunching effects General rating: an odd bundle of games which, although play-able, doesn't offer much in the originality stakes

Presentation	74%
Graphics	80%
Sound	72%
Playability	78%
Addictive qualities	73%
<b>OVERALL 7</b>	4%



▲ Not in Ludlow castle on Savage's Level One

weapons. These are especially useful against massive Guardians.

Naturally, when you've fought through them you find your sweetheart's gone for a stroll down Death Valley. After a long multiload you set off in pursuit only to find yourself in a battle

Huge guardians seem all the rage at the moment and Savage certainly has them on Level One. The next level's like the superb 3-D Deathchase but nowhere near as good, while Level Three brings back memories of the Alchemist with huge sprites (and colour clash). While well presented (apart from the rather jerky scrolling on Level Three), with good tunes and FX, there's nothing that really grabs you and keeps you playing.



# THE CHALLENGERS' CHALLENGE



The last Inter-magazine Challenge was held way back in Christmas 1986, when AMTIX! (they of the Amstrads) provided some of the worst competition in living memory. Two years later AMTIX! has sadly fallen by the way, perhaps out of embarrassment, but since then THE GAMES MACHINE has been launched and its staff make the 1988 Challenge once again a tripartite affair. Everyone's favourite, LLOYD MANGRAM investigates...

s organized by ZZAP! Editor Gor-don Houghton the Challenge will begin at 2:45pm (way back at the end of a certain month beginning with 'S', but I'll not ruin the illusion – Ed). Each challenger has nominated a game on which everyone will have ten minutes to get their highest score. The exceptions are the two-player games Atron 5000 (Amiga) and Match Day II (Spec), where points will be awarded after a series of play-offs. On each game the winner will be given six points, the runner-up five points and so on.

After lunch most of the competitors are still affecting an air of nonchalant disdain. No-one wants to seem too concerned. But the veneer of civilized behaviour soon disappears with the arrival of photographers Cameron 'look at me not the screen' Pound and Michael 'I'm camera shy too' Parkinson. Chaos ensues as the distracting duo jump onto tables, set off dazzling flash guns and yell out belittling comments. If a CRASH reviewer is again to win the Challenge, as in '86, he's going to need superb concentration. First of all, here's a rundown of the competitors . . .

PHILIP KING



One of CRASH's top wordsmiths, and forever borrowing my Long Word Dictionary, is this decidedly reticent young local. Asked about his interests, all he'll admit to is role-playing games,

intelligently avoiding providing ammunition

for the Ed who has so far labelled Phil a 'sheep farmer' and underwater snooker enthusiast. (Who? Me? – Ed.)

Game: Match Day II. Phil has won a CRASH Challenge on this 3-0, 3-0. Upon hearing of Phil's choice, ZZAP! and TGM staff were thrown into despair -- unfortunately so was Nick 'Mr Cruciality' Roberts.

Tactics: chase every ball, never let anything go and don't play Phil!

### NICK ROBERTS



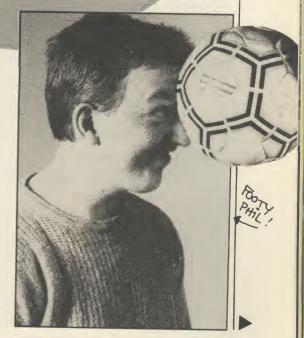
Why CRASH tipsters have to be such slaves to fashion I'll never know, but Nick follows the tradition with panache. A part-time college student, sorry, a part-time CRASH writer Nick still

finds time to D.J. his 'supremely hip IMAGES – Disco Entertainment.

Favourite pop group: Pet Shop Boys. Most prominent office poster: *Game Over II*. Pet hates: Editorial comments linking him with an overconsumption of nutrients (esp. pizzas). For yet more information on Nick check out his Guide To Cruciality (page 206).

Game: Cybernoid, of course. Besides being Nick's favourite game he's also won the Cybernoid CRASH Challenge, 3-0. Other challengers like the game as well, on their own machines, but showing a refreshing lack of sneaky tactics Nick picks it anyway.

Tactics: collect as many jewels as possible, then dash for the end of level bonuses.



CRASH Christmas Special 1988



A relatively recent addition to the ZZAP! team the Scouser from Flint distinguished himself at the 1988 PC Show as the most colourful, if not daftest, of the lot by cover-ing himself with Olibugs.

Prior to being drafted to ZZAP!, Maff was a member of an amateur pop group which used to make promo videos of themselves. Favourite pop group: Front 242 (who?). Most prominent office poster: Game Over II (again!). Pet hates: Spectrums and Match

Day II (ah well, who cares?).

Game: Menace on the machine Maff adores, the Amiga. Menace is a Salamanderstyle shoot-'em-up, complete with awesome end-of-level nasty. Only one life is offered, but by destroying all the aliens in an attack wave a bonus icon is dropped which can provide extra points, weapons and shield power according to how many times it's shot.

Tactics: learn enemy attack patterns, destroy last alien in wave as far from right of screen as possible - giving maximum time to blast points/weapon bonus icon into required add-on.

ROBIN\_CANDY



Robin C has worked for CRASH almost from the beginning, making his first appearance as a model (for CRASH Tshirts) in Issue 6. Since then Robin has become increasingly obsessed

with style and is never seen looking less than totally fashionable. During his days at CRASH he's designed a level of Micronaut One, the title screen for Sweevo's World, as well as boasting a rare Elite badge. Currently studying at college for a career as an Army officer Robin now works part-time for TGM - but at least his tips no longer clutter my desk as in the old days. Favourite pop group:

Propaganda/Act.

Game: Thunder Blade on the Sega console. A choice heavily influenced by the Machiavellian scheming of fellow TGM reviewer Robin Hogg. According to the latter's reasoning, a Sega game would be an excellent choice since none of the other magazines would've had a chance to play it - but then again Robin C hadn't played it much either. The actual game is made up of stages divided into three levels; overhead, vertically scrolling shoot-'em-up, more of the same in 3-D with the helicopter flying 'into the screen' and back to an overhead

Tactics: move about a lot and learn attack waves. In fact, practising on it wouldn't be a bad idea, PHIL!

### ON HOUGHTON



The latest man at the helm of Newsfield's noisiest magazine (that's ZZAP!), Gordon has presided over an expert restyling of the 64 owner's favourite organ. Favourite leisure activity:

attending German beer festivals. Most prominent office ornaments: Kati Hamza and a giant fish. Pet hates: software house

Game: Hunter's Moon on the C64. A choice widely regarded as a work of political genius since this is a ZZAP! Sizzler written by ZZAP! diarist Martin Walker for Newsfield's favourite software house, Thalamus. Hunter's Moon is made up of systems, each divided into levels which contain up to three star cells. Collecting cells in this eight-way scrolling shoot-'em-up involves blasting through the maze-like hives which contain them. Unfortunately the hives continually rebuild themselves via a cursor which circles through them. Obviously a life is lost if the cursor rebuilds the bit of blasted hive you're passing through.

Tactics: know where the star cells are hidden, be patient so as not to rush into cursor's path and either make sure you're name's Gordon Houghton or you've practised for at

least six months.



Having worked on TGM virtually from the begin-ning Robin is one of the most experienced reviewers and it's obvious he intends to win. Besides running TGM's Info Desk and Confron-

tation: Coin-Op arcade series, Robin is interested in all things military.

Favourite pop group: Def Leppard/Bon Jovi. Most prominent office poster: Red

Storm Rising. Pet hates: derogatory comments about his black and white Fiat Panda. (The only man to add 'rust' to his four-letterword vocabulary! - Ed.)

Game: Atron 5000 on the Amiga. This graphically mediocre two-player light-cycle game is incredibly playable and Robin's been practising on it since TGM first

Tactics: collect special feature icons before your opponent, use features (like speed-ups and walls) at correct time.



### And into battle they went . . .

### THUNDER BLADE

By the time you read this you've probably already played CRASH's Spectrum Thunder Blade demo, but as the Challenge begins none of the CRASH team have, so they're happy to let Robin H take first go. The headbanger with a US Marines haircut takes hold of the small, Sega joystick with a self-confident smirk. But no sooner than he's pressed fire than the media pack pounce. Michael crouches down to photograph the deepest recesses of Robin's nostrils while Cameron leaps onto a table to flashgun any developing bald spots. With riotous ZZAP! reviewers gathered round as well, Robin gets off to a shakey start. After just four minutes he's lost two of his three lives and is looking decidedly unnerved. Rather than persist with only a single life he resets the game.

Unfortunately just as he starts again the TGM Cheerleading squad turns up with a 'who do we appreciate' chant and energetic 'star' jumps. The squad, in matching cycling shorts, is led by Group Promotions Executive Richard Eddy. A member of the notorious '86 AMTIX! team, Richard was then quoted as saying: 'I just don't play games - that's all there is to it!'. Initially it seems he might again sabotage his favoured magazine's chances, but Robin struggles on, urging the cheerleaders to hassle someone else. When his time runs out his score is a massive 817000. Who can follow that?

While Nick stays in the background, Phil bravely steps into



the media hoopla. Suffering advice from Robin C along the lines of 'collect that fireball for extra power' Phil's first turn gets off to a rocky start, and quick a reset. On his second attempt Phil gets to the 3-D section to earn 95000 before heavy antiaircraft fire from the tanks bring him down. On his third attempt Phil fights through the first section without losing a life, but once again flak proves lethal -126000. A final go in the few minutes remaining betters that score to provide a respectable 133000

Having closely watched Phil's problems Nick decides to give it a go himself. His turn gets off to an inauspicious start with a life lost on the first, relatively easy section. Rather than reset Nick persists only to lose yet another life on section two — when dodging a wave of jets puts him in the way of a fireball. Nick shrugs it off though, and successfully completes Stage One. The bonus gives him 605000 and TGM hecklers are momentarily silenced.

Stage Two is set in the countryside and Nick skillfully pilots his copter through a barrage of enemy fire in the first valley section. Even Robin H begins to look worried. Section two is in 3-D, with the copter trying to fly between stone pillars in a tunnel. Nick misjudges one by a fraction and goes down in flames, after six minutes and forty seconds. His final score: 713000.

Robin Candy looks distinctly uneasy when he sits down to beat Nick's score on a game which is supposed to be his own. Nevertheless, he survives a hail of flak to complete Stage One. In Stage Two he doesn't progress much further than Nick – just enough to edge him into second place with 774000.

The ZZAP! team take their turns next and, despite the encouragement of Front 242's 'Head Hunter' pounding from Maff's ghetto blaster, suffer from not having played the game before. Gordon manages fifth place with 124000 while Maff takes last place on 116000.

### MENACE

The next game, however, is Maff's own choice and his first go is a suitably impressive demonstration. Making excellent use of bonus icons, Maff builds up a formidable array of weaponry to power through his ten minutes without ever looking vulnerable. This masterful display takes Maff to the end-oflevel monster on Level Three and 119740. Gordon plays next and shows off his own practise with a respectable 102490. Robin C follows with 101940, agonizingly close to Gordon's score but not quite good enough. In the mean-



time Phil's been helping time some other games and comes to Menace unprepared. He does fine avoiding the alien attack waves, but hasn't quite got the knack of collecting the add-on weapons. The unfortunate consequence is that when he reaches the end-of-level nasty he's woefully underarmed. After several long seconds of dodging the monster's bullets, Phil's laser has made little impact on the monster and it unleashes a fatal onslaught of homing mis-siles - 28700. A second attempt is much the same as the first, but at least improves his score to

Nick takes his turn next, and once again shows he's been watching other people's tactics Level One, the Sea of Karnagh, is completed almost effortlessly through good use of bonus icons. Level Two, the Vanguard Warzone, is begun after Nick asks 242 to be turned down. With sampled speech informing Nick of the weapons he picks up, the tips expert smoothly completes the level. Carnage Rift seems little harder, until Nick fails by about two laser hits to turn a bonus icon into extra shield power. Nick bravely battles on a little longer but the mistake proves sadly fatal. Nevertheless his superb score of 102940 puts him, for the moment, in second place having beaten Gordon's score by just 450 points. Finally it's Robin H's turn. He's reviewed the game for TGM and his performance is predictably slick, scoring the first major upset of the Challenge by beating Maff's score. His 126390 win on another magazine's choice, together with his victory on Thunder

Blade, clearly puts him in the lead with a maximum of 12 points – and Atron 5000 has yet to be played. But in second place Nick certainly isn't doing badly either and has eight points through two good third places on two 'away' games.

### HUNTER'S MOON

Competition now moves on to the second ZZAP! game – Gordon's esoteric shoot-'em-up Hunter's Moon. If the choice seems designed to please ZZAP! contributors it doesn't do badly for Gordon either. Without any apparent effort he scores a huge 46275. Little intimidated

MAFF THE TAFF!

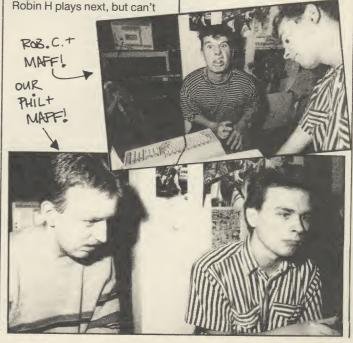
repeat his earlier successes and must be content with just 20100. Maff has never much liked Hunter's Moon and after just four minutes has to abandon his go in disgust. While Maff leaves for a grumble Phil once again has to tackle a game he's hardly played. Despite a determined effort he can manage no more than 8000. When Maff returns he gives a hint of how the game should be played scoring 15825. Robin C doesn't watch, however, and pays the price of inexperience, only just beating Phil with 9875. When Nick takes his turn he loses a life in practically the first second. He resets, changes joysticks and has another go. The cruel irony of the game is that the more Nick learns about the importance of patience in playing the game, the less time he has to practise it. Nevertheless his final score of 11200 is enough to give him a respectable fourth place.

Gordon's first place here has boosted him to joint second with Nick, each on 11 points. Robin H, however, is even further in the lead with 17 points. In fourth place there's Maff on ten points, in fifth Robin C has nine points in sixth position. On the next game, however, CRASH must surely do

well.

### CYBERNOID

Clearly pleased with his crushing victory on Hunter's Moon Gordon chooses to be first on Cybernoid, a game he enjoys on the Amiga. The Spectrum game plays faster though, and at the end of his ten minutes Gordon has to be satisfied with 11800. Maff plays next and mumbling unrepeatable comments about the Spectrum manages a derisory 10900. Next one to take the





Cybernoid challenge is Robin Candy. Having practised the game quite heavily on the Spectrum he seems a formidable opponent. He's decided to spend a lot of time on the jewel collection screens before dashing for the end of level bonus. Unfortunately he keeps dying while collecting jewels and is forced to reset. On his second turn he does a little better though, final score 6440. Robin H plays next and is soon in the lead again, finishing with 32670.

Possibly a little put off by watching Robin C's attempt Nick makes a terrible start, quickly losing two lives collecting jewels. He resets, only to lose

DAYII

CRASH's 'Maradona' puts on a virtuoso display here beating Gordon 6-0, Robin C 2-0 and Robin H 4-0 to become undisputed champion. Robin H's narrow 2-1 victory over Robin C gives him second place and the latter third place. The final three positions see the two ZZAP! reviewers, and in particular Maff, mumbling over attribute problems as they see the Challenge going to Robin H. Despite their complaints they still beat Nick, (who considers the game beneath him), putting Gordon fourth and Maff fifth.



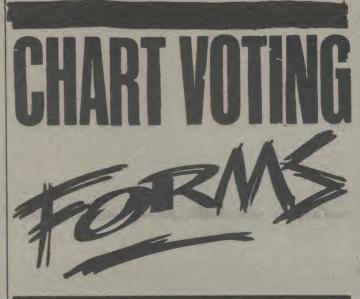
another life in the jewel section. Wisely changing tactics he lays some mines to form a barrier behind which he blasts the aliens for jewels. A huge score is built-up and Nick finishes Level One with 31055 and only two lives lost. On Level Two he battles his way to another jewel screen and amasses 67752 before time runs out.

Can Phil now restore his games credentials? He too makes a shakey start and has to reset. But on his second go he's far more self-confident and his fingers flicker expertly over the Spectrum's keyboard. Unfortunately due to a lack of communication with his timekeeper he spends too much time on the Level Two's jewel screen and can't get to the second end-of-level bonus. His final score of 63157 gives him a well-deserved second place.

ATRON 5000

The final game is something of a formality, but Robin H is unable to relax and apart from a close game with Gordon never looks threatened. Maff, despite hating the game, somehow comes second with Robin C in third place and Gordon in fourth. A close, 37-28 match between Phil and Nick gives the latter victory confirming his joint second-place finish with Gordon - both on 20 points. In fourth place, just one point behind it's Maff, then Robin C (18) and finally Phil on 17. Compared to such surprisingly close points Robin Hogg's victory on 32 points is all the more astounding - and leads to him being firmly put in his place in the after-match photo session.

Next month (or perhaps the month after – Ed) finally sees the return of Robin Candy in the eagerly-awaited *The Empire Strikes Back* Challenge. Different time, same place and all the fun of the fair. And let's wish Robin the very best of luck! He'll need it.



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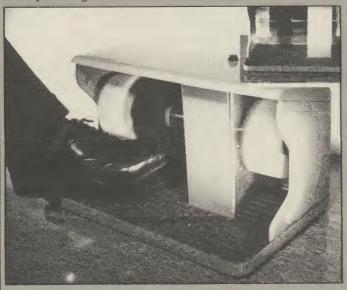
SPECTOR ECTRIC

Jingle bells, jingle bells, jingle all the way. Brand new toys on Christmas morn . . . no batteries till Boxing Day.

Crucial people need crucial accessories. And there's no person more crucial (or rich) than MEL CROUCHER (apart from Nick Roberts). So we asked Mel what he thought would be the top trendy gadgets of this Christmas season. It doesn't matter what they do (preferably nothing), just so long as no-one else has got them. Here's what he came up with . . .

### **Electronic Cobblers**

We kick off first with an incredible techno toy for shoe care, so cobblers beware! The Valetmaster Shoe Valet only needs two-hundred and forty volts, and £79.95 of your money, to do the job that an old rag can do just as well. Just plug it in, turn it on and put your foot in it. And what's more, the advertising blurb reckons that it 'only takes a few minutes' to do what hand-polishing can achieve in seconds. Brilliant!



Let there be light

Next, let me spotlight another really useful item that should be on everyone's Christmas list. The Power Beam 2000torch costs a mere £9.95 and is made of, wait for it, plastic! It features a 'convenient ring binder' for slipping into last Christmas's Filofax, and is designed to work at a depth of ten metres underwater. So next time grandad drops his false teeth down the loo, simply reach for your Power Beam and jump down the U-bend to rescue them.



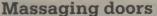
Frothy coffee

Fed up with flat coffee? Of course you are, but the flat coffee misery is now at an end, thanks to this spaceage mains-powered coffee spoon at only £29.95. You can also use its steam injection nozzle to clean out the wax from your ears! although this is not recommended by the manufactur-



Balls and yet more balls

Balls are definitely IN this Christmas, and here's my round-up of crucial gadgets to help you get the best out of them, kicking off with the Check-Go 'sweet spot' finder. You simply plonk your favourite ball inside the gizmo, then wait while a 10,000rpm motor spins it around and finds its natural axis. Then you mark the axis with a special pen and remove your ball. Only £19.95 including batteries and pen. What? Oh, sorry. It's meant to improve your golf.



A must for anyone who wants to massage their eggs with balls (or vice versa) and I quote, 'When executive stress starts to attack, close the door . . . and massage it away.' Yes folks, get rid of those stressful doors with this battery - operated



personal vibration device (batteries not included) at £6.65. You can also emboss your balls with your initials, using a vicious looking cast iron machine, but I will not publicize it for reasons of bad taste.

## Anyone for ten-

Now why didn't I think of this one before! For a mere £11.95 you can buy an electronic digital alarm clock in a ball, and when it goes off in the early hours you can throw it away. There's also a baseball for Channel 4-viewing readers.



### Tee time

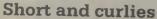
Advertised as 'the first game of its kind' (by someone who's been living on another planet for the past five years), this computer game really does feature a whole load of balls. One or two players can choose from a staggering selection of one



course (18 holes, though!), and play this incredible simulation on a huge 234" screen. But the real breakthrough is in the price of Pro Golf, because although it displays slightly less than a £1.99 golf simulator, it only costs £49.95.



# who h RGADGET IN CDREAMS

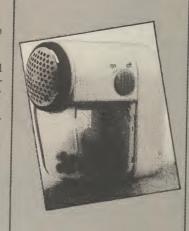


And now for a selection of intimate gifts. First, I am proud to report a cure for premature baldies like me. Yes folks, for only £12.95 you can buy an aerosol can of MANE spray-on hair. It contains a sort of electrostatic muesli. and at last you will be able to turn into a werewolf and damage the ozone layer at the same time. A vital purchase.



Pulling the wool

All right, I know I've recommended this amazing device in a sister publication (THE GAMES MACHINE), but I consider it my duty to spread the word as widely as possible (and get as much money as possible-Ed). Not recommended for people with Belfast accents, the Clothes Shaver is a battery operated clothes groomer 'for removing all those irritating fluffy balls.' No longer do we have to rely on silly old-fashioned fingers, now we can spend £5.95 and shave our woollies electrically.



Shut up! Shush!

Probably my favourite techno toy this season. A user-friendly set of bathroom scales, accurate to 'the nearest pound' (wow, doncha just love hi-tech.) Not only can it remember the weights of up to five people (don't ask me how you get five people to stand on it), but it will also tell you how much pork you've gained or lost since yesterday, wish you 'goodbye' and 'have a nice day', and plead for some new batteries if somebody misses the urinal. Its synthetic voice sounds like Ronald Reagan on acid, and you'll be pleased to know that it only costs £89.95 excluding the seven batteries it needs to operate.



Forget those pocket cassette recorders that offer hours of record and playback, here's a real bit of techno innovation. The Plus Voice Memo only costs the same as a normal recorder, but for £19.95 you get a whole Thirty Seconds of looped tape. Imagine what you could record in a whole thirty seconds folks, literally dozens of words. And that's not all, after



playback the tape automatically resets for next time you want to record the first verse of your favourite song, and you can wipe out your last memo completely by automatic acciNote the message

The vital communications modem that we've all been waiting for. A miniature plastic grand piano for £29.95 with numbered keys for easy dialling, and a neat little lid that you stuff in your ear if you want to make a phone call. Should you 'want to relax in complete privacy, you can simply turn the telephone off!'. You will be pleased to hear that it comes complete with an approved BT plug, although the straitjacket appears to be missing.



Dancing in the dark

Here's a fantastic way to deal with pick pockets, a light-sensitive wallet which screams if it gets nicked. For a mere £14.95 you can keep all your cash and credit cards in the Alarm Wallet and press the little light-sensitive burglar alarm that goes off when you take it out. Then just hope that nobody decides to steal it in the dark, when 85% of all burglaries take place. Whoops!

### More nickers

Speaking of nickers, how about an electronic guard dog for £44.95? The Boston Bulldog gets plugged into the mains, and doesn't need feeding, taking for walks or a pooper-scooper to clear up after it. It will detect any loud noise at a range of several feet, and start barking fierce warnings for up to a minute. Naturally, you will have to ask any burglars to make a loud noise when they come to call, but apart from that . . .

I wasn't pushed . .

Fresh on the market, this £9.95 product should really clean up. It not only cleans both sides of the window at the same time, it also cleans both sides of the window at the same time.(!) Unfortunately it ain't suitable for double-glazing, high-rise buildings, strong winds and people with no sense of humour, but with luck you may persuade mum's hair curlers and any other stray metallic objects to crash through the window.

Well folks, I hope that this careful analysis of the latest high-tech gift ideas has solved all of your present-buying problems. I know it's helped me. After careful consideration I have decided to give everyone the same sensible item which is the very latest utility product. My choice? Edible knickers. Male or female, £3.95 from Estcourt Trading of Tetbury in Gloucester. All of my other recommendations are available from Premiere or Innovations mail order (20793-514666 for more information and a catalogue), and if you decide to buy them then you're even dafter than me. Merry Christmas . . .



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# STHE MUNSTERS!

# MUNSTERS are coming!!!

Aaaaagh, what's this, a bunch of ghosts and ghouls have just appeared through the wall of my broom cupboard. Bwah! Help, mummy minion, I'm fwightened. Aaaaagh, what's this, Alternative Software have set up a new software label called Again, Again, inspiring loads of mega-corny jokes. Their first release isn't a joke though, and you certainly wouldn't catch me playing such a scarey game as the computer version of The Munsters. But for braver folk than me here's what it's about . . .

Apparently all is not well at 1313 Mockingbird Avenue. The Munsters' home has been overrun by all sorts of nasty ghosts and ghouls, and things that go bump in the night. Not only that, but the swines have kidnapped Marilyn, the only non-Munster in the house, and carried her away. So it's up to the other Munsters to search the surrounding countryside and find her.

Well, after I had recovered from the fright of the message bearing ghosts, I contacted Again, Again, again, by a much lessspooky communications system – the telephone – and asked them what prizes were on offer in this spooky comp. First prize for two (un)fortunate people is an all-expenses paid trip, for each winner and a friend (if they can manage to drag anyone along), to The London Dungeons. This is a collection of some of the most horrible exhibits ever shown. I've never been there myself (cos I'm a



coward), but apparently my great great uncle is on show; mainly because he became notorious for boring fifty people to death at a dinner party he once held.

The winners will also receive a copy of The Munsters game.

Also standing to be scarified by a copy of this ghostly program are the thirty (un)lucky second prize winners. So if you would like to win a trip to The London Dungeons, or a copy of the game, it's photo caption time again (again) folks. Just tell us what lovable Herman Munster is saying, and you could win one of the scarey prizes. The usual rules apply, and no entries received after January 1 will even be considered, sorry but that's the way it is. Send all entries to BWAH! I'S FWIGHTENED, CRASH, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB.







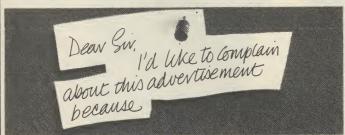


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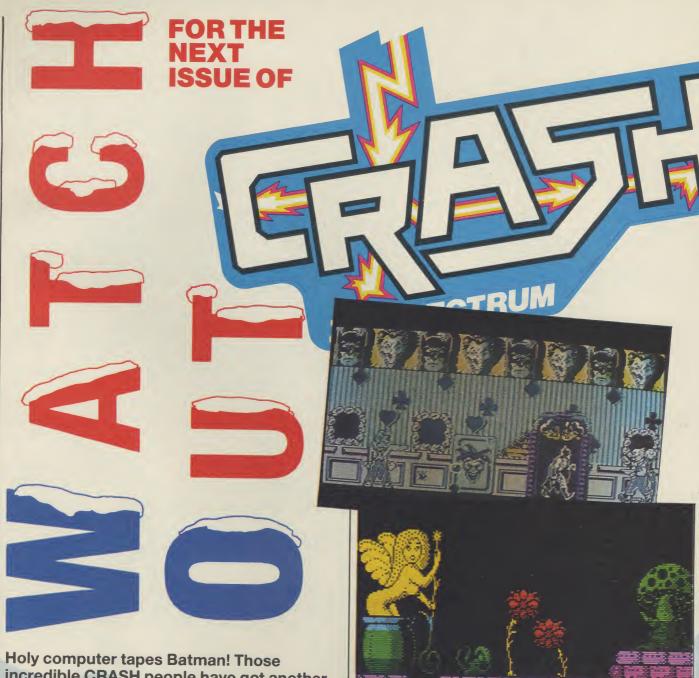
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